

Sirbel indicted in State Security Court

AMMAN (AP) — A military prosecutor Saturday formally charged a Palestinian Muslim fundamentalist leader with having links to an outlawed militant group. In a four-court indictment, the prosecutor also accused Ibrahim Sirbel of illegal possession of arms and explosives, including dynamite and grenades. The two-page indictment accused Mr. Sirbel of having recruited Muslim personalities from neighbouring Arab countries into the previously unknown group. The group is called Islamic Jihad — Battalions of Al Aqsa, the charge sheet said. The indictment by Prosecutor-General Hassan Tarawneh was read in a three-hour open hearing at the State Security Court. Mr. Sirbel, 64, from the Israeli-occupied West Bank city of Hebron, heads a cultural centre in Ruseifa. He was jailed Aug. 25.

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China to supply 40 fighters to Pakistan

ISLAMABAD (R) — China will supply 40 F-7P jet fighters to Pakistan by the end of next year, a senior Pakistani official said Saturday. The deliveries of the single-seat tactical fighters under an agreement concluded last June would be made in phases to be completed by the end of 1993, Defence Production Ministry Secretary F.I. Malik told Reuters. The Pakistan air force first deployed the F-7P, a modernised version of the MiG-21, about two years ago under a contract signed in 1987. The number of the planes was not known. Flying at twice the speed of sound, the F-7Ps will eventually replace the air force's ageing Chinese-built F-6 fighters in an estimated fleet of more than 550 combat aircraft.

5 Hizbollahs jailed for life in France

PARIS (AP) — A special terrorism court sentenced in absentia five Lebanese, all members of the Hizbollah group, to life in prison for their roles in the wave of Paris bombings in 1985-86 that killed 13 people and injured more than 300. Ibrahim Akil, Ali Hamade, Habib Haidar, Hussein Mazbouh and Hassan Ghosn were convicted of assassination and attempted assassination in the attacks that terrorised Paris from December 1985 through September 1986. The five are all described as active members of the Iranian-backed Hizbollah group operating in Lebanon. It was the second conviction in absentia for the five who were sentenced to terms ranging from 10 to 20 years for criminal association in October 1990 by a lower court. The man identified as the leader of the Paris bombing wave, Tunisian Fouad Ali Saïeh, was sentenced in April to life in prison.

Egypt vows to crush extremists

CAIRO (R) — The Egyptian government vowed Saturday to crush Muslim extremists and called on the people to join the fight against terrorism. "We are determined to crush these groups whatever the burdens or sacrifices," Interior Minister Mohamed Abdel Halim Musa told reporters. "The responsibility of facing terrorism and extremism extends to every citizen on Egyptian soil." Mr. Musa was commenting on a bomb blast on a train in southern Egypt that killed four and injured nine last week. The bomb exploded before a militant could throw it from the window of a train toilet at security troops near Dayrut railway station, about 30 kilometres south of Cairo. Mr. Musa said police had identified the bomber Saturday. Telephone calls to news media claimed responsibility for the attacks on behalf of the underground Al Gama'a Al Islamiya (the Islamic Group).

France, Iran sign \$300m agreement

NICOSIA (AP) — Iran and France Saturday signed a \$300 million agreement for the sale of French petrochemical equipment and transfer of technological know-how, the official Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA) reported. The agreement was signed by visiting French Trade Minister Bruno Durieux and Oil Minister Gholamreza Aghazadeh. Under the pact, the petrochemical complex in the northwestern city of Tabriz — known as Technip — will set up French-provided production lines for a variety of products including raw materials used in producing plastics, electrical equipment, furniture, paints and chemical solvents.

State Department denies Obey's charge

WASHINGTON (Agencies) — The U.S. State Department has reiterated that investigations have found no evidence to support allegations that Jordan supplied arms to Iraq during last year's Gulf war. A statement, given Oct. 8 in reply to a written question from reporters on a charge levelled by Congressman David Obey, said: "This charge first surfaced in spring 1991. At that time, we investigated and found nothing to substantiate it."

Iraq frees American detained near border

Baghdad warns banks against U.N. plan

BAGHDAD (Agencies) — Iraq Saturday freed American bomb-disposal expert Chad Hall, whose detention by Iraqi security police on the border with Kuwait had raised tensions in the run-up to the U.S. presidential election.

U.N. officials in Baghdad and Kuwait said Mr. Hall was turned over in the Iraqi capital to the commander of the U.N. Iraq-Kuwait Observer Mission (UNIKOM), Colonel Oleg Ovetchkin.

A spokesman for the United Nations in Kuwait, Abdul Latif Khabbaj, said Mr. Hall was freed at 3:20 p.m. (1220 GMT). "He's in good health," Mr. Khabbaj told the Associated Press.

The 50-year-old American was expected to be returned to the emirate through the U.N. observers' headquarters camp in the port of Umm Qasr north of Kuwait City, the spokesman said. "It could be today, it could be tomorrow morning," Mr. Khabbaj said Saturday afternoon.

In the Iraqi capital, a U.N. official, speaking on condition of anonymity, also said Mr. Hall was turned over to Mr. Ovetchkin and added: "I cannot say if he

is in Baghdad or travelling right now, but he is in the protection of the United Nations and safe."

The detention of Mr. Hall on Thursday, coupled with Baghdad's attempts to delay the trip of a team of U.N. weapons inspectors until after the U.S. presidential election Nov. 3, had raised tensions between Washington and Baghdad.

There was speculation that Iraq would choose the culminating days of the campaign to provoke President George Bush, who is waging an uphill battle as challenger Bill Clinton continues to hold the lead in opinion polls.

But the Ministry of Information in Baghdad, which announced Mr. Hall's impending release earlier in the day, said the capture was the result of "confusion" by border police.

Iraq's ambassador to the U.N., Nizar Hamdoun, had told reporters his country wanted to avoid a crisis over the issue.

In Baghdad Saturday afternoon, two senior U.N. officials hastily left for the military airport at Habbaniyah outside the city, which the world body uses to bring its personnel in and out of the country.

A senior Polish diplomat, speaking on condition of anonymity, said Mr. Hall's departure for Kuwait was originally planned for Saturday evening but might be delayed for "technical reasons."

Poland has handled American diplomatic interests in Baghdad since the Gulf war.

Mr. Hall, a retired U.S. army major, was taken at gunpoint by Iraqi security police after an argument whether he and two Pakistani workers were working in Kuwait or Iraq.

The area used to be in Iraq but was given to Kuwait by a U.N. border commission decision in May that Baghdad refused to recognise.

Warning to banks

Iraq warned foreign banks on Saturday it will sue those that give its assets to the United Nations and will have scores to settle in its future dealings with countries and companies.

"We shall file a suit against any bank, company and organisation in accordance to its legal system,"

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Palestinian shot dead, 52 wounded in occupied lands

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (Agencies) — Israeli troops shot dead one Palestinian and wounded 52 in clashes in occupied Jerusalem and throughout the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip Saturday, Palestinian sources and Israeli authorities said.

Most of the casualties were in the Gaza Strip where military sources said 40 Palestinians were wounded. In one incident, 24 Palestinians were shot and wounded when troops clashed with hundreds of demonstrators near Red Cross offices in Gaza City and later when troops used force to halt some 1,000 people marching from the offices, Palestinian sources said.

The clashes occurred during demonstrations by Palestinians in support of thousands of prisoners staging a hunger-strike in Israeli detention camps and jails that has unleashed a wave of unrest in the occupied territories.

In Beita, a West Bank village near Nablus, 23-year-old Amin

Ahmad Hamayel was shot dead and two other men were wounded in clashes between villagers and troops, Palestinian sources said.

Military sources said the men were shot after they threw stones at an army force and ignored orders to halt.

They said nine Palestinians were wounded by troops in Nusseirat refugee camp, Beit Hanoun village and Rafah in the Gaza Strip.

Military sources said a border policeman was taken by helicopter to hospital after he was seriously wounded by a stone during the clashes, they said.

A border policeman shot and wounded a Palestinian youth in Arab East Jerusalem who tried to take his weapon during a demonstration in support of hunger-strikers, police said.

Troops shot and wounded nine Palestinians in clashes with hundreds of demonstrators in Jenin, Hebron and Ramallah in the West Bank, Palestinian sources

said. "It was like all hell broke loose in Ramallah today. The clashes went on for two hours, roads were blocked, tyres burned," said one Ramallah resident.

Since the Palestinian revolt against Israeli occupation began in December 1987, Israelis have killed 937 Palestinians, according to a Reuters count.

The hunger-strike, the biggest since a 20-day fast at the start of the revolt nearly five years ago, seems to have rejuvenated the uprising. Scores of Palestinians have been wounded in almost daily mass demonstrations of support.

Israel says the strike is politically motivated with the aim of bolstering the Palestinian cause in Middle East peace talks. It says 3,000 of the 12,000 Palestinians it holds on political or "security" charges are fasting.

Palestinians say 10,000 prisoners are on hunger-strike demanding better living and medical

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Iraqi Kurds mass to strike PKK bastion

SIDAKAN, Iraq (R) — Iraqi Kurds said Saturday they had cornered separatist Kurdish guerrillas from Turkey after a week of fighting and were massing thousands of men for a final assault to drive them out of their territory.

Commanders of Iraqi Peshmerga guerrillas in northeast Iraq said the Kurdish Labour Party (PKK) guerrillas were hemmed into a mountainous triangle on the borders of Turkey, Iraq and Iran and 4,500 men were gathering to attack them.

Peshmerga forces were converging from three directions and the attack would be launched Saturday or Sunday, commanders in this mountain village said.

Iraqi Kurds launched an offensive to expel the PKK fighters last Sunday after the PKK ignored an ultimatum to quit the region without a fight.

The PKK — fighting for an independent homeland for Turkey's 10 million Kurds — has been simultaneously pounded from the air by Turkish warplanes and their forces across the border in Turkey are under attack by Turkish troops.

Turkish television quoted Interior Minister Ismet Sezgin on Friday as saying Turkish forces killed 215 PKK fighters and captured nearly 400 in the past week

— one of the highest tolls in the eighth-year conflict that has claimed some 5,000 lives.

Mr. Sezgin also said about 100 PKK fighters were trapped on Mount Agri (Ararat) in eastern Turkey where security forces launched an offensive against them last week.

Mount Agri lies near the Armenian frontier some 200 kilometres north of the Iraqi border where other PKK forces are battling the Peshmerga.

Mr. Sezgin said the PKK had suffered "very great losses" in northern Iraq but gave no details. He said Turkey's southern neighbours Syria and Iran were not helping the cornered guerrillas and Syria had 500 PKK "terrorists" in its jails.

Peshmerga commanders in Sidakan said the PKK had lost at least 25 dead against five Peshmerga killed. No overall casualty toll was available.

The Iraqi Kurds said they had seized control of the Gali Rash region up to the Turkish border and the strategic heights of Jebel Delfi further south in this week's battles.

Iraqi Kurds say the PKK's presence is preventing them from resettling border villages and is drawing Turkish air raids. Iraqi Kurds become security partners with Turkey, page 2



His Majesty King Hussein Saturday bids farewell to Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat, who was leaving Jordan after a five-day visit (Petra photo)

Arafat leaves after 5 days of top-level talks, check-up

PLO chairman, PFLP leader to maintain dialogue

By P.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat left Amman Saturday after a five-day visit during which he held talks with His Majesty King Hussein and underwent a routine medical check-up at an Amman hospital.

Mr. Arafat, chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), held a round of talks with King Hussein before his departure. The talks dealt with "various political issues of mutual concern" and Jordanian-Palestinian coordination, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, reported.

The agency said the two leaders voiced "satisfaction with the brotherly Jordanian-Palestinian relations and coordination which are based on mutual confidence."

The meeting was attended by Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker, Royal Court Chief

Khaled Al Karaki, PLO Executive Committee member Yasser Abed Rabbo and the Palestinian ambassador to Jordan.

Mr. Arafat, who said upon his arrival four days ago that the main objective of his visit was to congratulate the King upon his successful surgery and safe return home, presented a sword to the King, Petra said.

"This is an Arab sword presented to an Arab knight," Mr. Arafat said presenting the token gift to His Majesty.

During his stay in Amman, Mr. Arafat held two rounds of talks with the King, chaired a meeting of Amman-based members of the Palestine National Council (PNC), underwent a medical

check-up and met with George Habash, leader of the second largest PLO faction after Fatah and an opponent of the American-led Arab-Israeli peace talks.

Mr. Arafat and Dr. Habash,

secretary-general of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), did not resolve their basic differences, but agreed to keep channels of dialogue open after the meeting last week, according to informed sources.

Dr. Habash agreed to send PFLP delegates to next week's meeting of the Palestine National Council (PNC) with no preconditions, the sources said.

"In general it was a successful encounter, given the complexities that the two leaders face in the regional and international levels," said a source close to the talks. "It would have been naive to expect them to come up with answers to all their differences."

Another source confirmed that the meeting did make "progress" although no definite agreement was reached on the basic difference — Mr. Arafat's endorsement of the U.S.-led peace talks

(Continued on page 3)

Dutch cut El Al toll estimate to 80

AMSTERDAM (R) — Dutch officials cut to 80 the number of people estimated to have been killed when an Israeli cargo jet slammed into an Amsterdam apartment complex but conceded they would never know the exact death toll.

City spokesman Maarten Lekkerkerker said the number of people listed as dead or as missing and presumed dead was lowered Saturday to 80 from 120 late Friday.

Amsterdam Mayor Ed Van Thijn told a news conference that many people named in a list of potential victims published on Friday had since been found alive. "This is a small piece of good news," he said.

Medical experts believe 10 to 30 per cent of the victims were completely consumed by the fireball which engulfed the apartment complex.

"That means we'll never know exactly how many people died and never know exactly who died," police Erik Nordholt said.

Initially 250 people were feared killed when the El Al Boeing 747-200 cargo plane plunged into two apartment buildings in the suburb of Bijlmermeer last Sunday.

Detectives, whose list of missing persons contained 1,500 names last Tuesday, continued to revise the list as more information was collected. Rescue workers have recovered 51 bodies, of which 14 have been identified.

Police also have the names of 43 other people, including the four aboard the aircraft, believed to be in or near the buildings when crash occurred. A further 23 people reported missing in the area have not been accounted for.

A large number of illegal immigrants, many of them from Africa and the Caribbean, lived in the

(Continued on page 5)

Sudan agrees to hold peace talks

KHARTOUM (R) — Sudan's military government has agreed to hold a fourth round of peace talks with the country's rebels in Nigeria later this month, a senior government official was quoted as saying Saturday. Mudathir Abdul Rahim, deputy chairman of the peace committee, in Sudan's appointed parliament, said the government agreed in a meeting with a visiting Nigerian delegation to hold the next round of talks with rebel Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) in Abuja between Oct. 31 and Nov. 5. Mr. Abdul Rahim, quoted in the official newspaper Al Inqaz Al Watani (national salvation), said the Nigerian delegation, led by presidential envoy Toogbi Aha Ganguon, would soon meet the SPLA, to seek its approval on the date. The government of Lieutenant-General Omar Hassan Al Bashir and the SPLA have held three rounds of peace talks. The last meeting was held in Abuja earlier this year. It ended without agreement because the government rejected SPLA demands that either Islamic law be scrapped or the predominantly Christian and animist southern Sudan, where the rebels get most of their support, be allowed to secede. 200 Sudanese boys seek refuge in Kenya

Saudis release Qatari soldier

DUBAI (Agencies) — Saudi Arabia has released a Qatari soldier captured in a border clash some days ago in a move that eases tensions between the two Gulf Arab allies.

He was freed after a week of hectic mediation by the two countries' partners in the six-nation Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), a political and economic alliance that controls almost all of the world's proven oil reserves.

The official Qatari News Agency (QNA) carried a brief statement late Friday quoting a military spokesman as saying "Saudite authorities had freed the Qatari soldier earlier Friday."

It said he was "captured" in the aggression against Chatham Khofous border post on September 30.

Kuwait, which holds the GCC presidency, led a mediation effort and Gulf diplomatic reserve tent said the Saudi gesture should ease tensions but that there was no way to go.

Qatar's reference to the clash as "aggression" indicated it was not fully appeased over the incident in which two Qatari soldiers and a Saudi were killed, diplomats said.

Qataris privately complain of repeated provocations along the border with Saudi Arabia. They say a 1965 agreement required joint delineation of the border but Saudi Arabia has recently been building sand barriers along about 70 per cent of — effectively a one-sided demarcation.

Saudi Arabia has consistently played down the incident. In London, Ambassador Ghaz Alghosbi said the "incident" does not warrant the escalation which was given to it by several circles.

(Continued on page 3)

Gulf Arabs urged to cut water use

DUBAI (R) — Ambitious agricultural projects are draining precious water reserves from the parched Gulf Arab states, environmental experts said Saturday.

They said deep underground reservoirs were rapidly being exhausted and urged delegates to the first Gulf water conference in Dubai to consider cutting water subsidies in the region.

"The whole (Gulf) region is an area of acute water deficit caused by widespread but intensive water development," Khaled Ubqba, a water resource scientist, told the conference.

"This development is largely dictated by confused water priorities which are the outcome of fast and extensive agricultural expansion," he added.

Water for agricultural use in the arid Gulf states is supplied, often for free, from underground reserves, or aquifers. Heavily subsidised tapwater is mainly supplied from desalination plants.

In an attempt to reduce reliance on food imports, many governments have backed schemes aimed at "greening the desert" and producing crops locally.

But the irrigation projects have placed unsustainable demands on water supplies, Mr. Ubqba said. Saudi Arabia, a major wheat exporter after a 10-year drive to develop its farming sector, was extracting 18 billion cubic metres a year of water from non-replenishable aquifers, much of it to meet agricultural needs, he said.

"Given the present rate of groundwater extraction, total exhaustion of these largely fossil groundwater reserves could take place before the year 2006," Mr. Ubqba said.

He said in the United Arab Emirates, extraction of groundwater had risen 20-fold between 1968 and 1988 to 3.4 billion cubic metres a year as a result of expanding population and an increase in land used for agriculture.

He said greater coordination was needed in tackling the problem across the Gulf Arab states should escape and also recognise the limits of water reserves when planning projects.

Another speaker said consumers should be given more incentive to conserve water. "There should be no subsidy for water use privately or agriculturally," Idris Mahmoud of the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development told Reuters.

"Show me a cheaper commodity per tonne than water. It is the cheapest commodity and yet the most essential."

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Lebanese rightists stage strike

BEIRUT (Agencies) — Lebanese Christians began a two-day strike Saturday to protest a government decision to go ahead with parliamentary elections they regard as a plot to tighten Syria's grip on Lebanon.

The row over the elections has widened the rift between the country's Muslim and Christian communities and sparked the worst political crisis since Lebanon's civil war ended in 1990.

Most businesses and banks, supermarkets and shops closed in Christian east Beirut and areas north and northwest of the capital. Only bakeries, pharmacies and hospitals were open.

Sunday's ballot in the mountain region of Keserwan is the last round of Lebanon's first elections for 20 years. At stake are five seats reserved for Maronite Christians in the 128-member parliament.

The government tightened security ahead of Sunday's vote, pouring thousands of troops into the Keserwan area overnight.

Four rightist groups, who banded together Friday to form the "Lebanese opposition front," urged voters to stage sit-ins in churches Sunday to protest the elections.

Some boutiques, restaurants, bookshops and groceries did not respect the strike. Their owners said they lost a lot of money in three previous shutdowns when the rest of the parliamentary election were conducted in late August and early September.

"I used to close all the time, but no-one reimbursed me for my losses," said Joseph Ebara, owner of a roadside snack bar in the mountain resort of Dikfaya.

A vegetable vendor in Jounieh said he opened his store because he did not want his merchandise to rot.

"But I will not vote tomorrow because none of the candidates is better than me," said Joseph

Trad, 58. "No to the elections" was sprayed on the walls of some shops in Jounieh. Posters of only two candidates were seen during a two-hour drive through Keserwan.

The Keserwan elections originally were scheduled for Aug. 30, but the voting was postponed when only one candidate was willing to run in the entire five-seat district.

The earlier balloting elsewhere in Lebanon resulted in the election of 123 deputies — 64 Muslims and 59 Christians. Most are supporters of Syria.

The opposition, grouping the Lebanese Forces, the National Liberal Party, the National Bloc Party, and followers of exiled rebel General Michel Aoun, accused the government of bias by going ahead with the elections.

Maronite Patriarch Nasrallah Boutros Sfeir, who spearheaded the poll boycott, voiced "regret" at the government's decision.

هذه من الاصل

Kurds become reluctant partners for Turkey

Kurdish fighters have been reluctant to join the Turkish army in the background.

The Marxist PKK was dug in on Delf Mountain and three other points surrounding deep Khakurk Valley.

Fighting between the two groups of Kurds broke out Sunday, and the heaviest battles were fought Friday, said Iraqi Kurdish leader Kamal Fouad.

Turkish jetfighters and artillery have been providing support to the Iraqi Kurds in their offensive.

There are no official casualty figures in the Kurdish battle, but scores have been killed on both sides. Up to an estimated 15,000 Peshmerga are in the area, though not all are engaged in fighting the roughly 3,000 Turkish Kurds.

Salim Karim Khan, a member of the Kurdish parliament established in northern Iraq, said Peshmergas were taking "one position in one night" instead of mounting a big attack to prevent a large loss of life among the defenders.

Many Iraqi Kurds are not eager to spill the blood of their Turkish brethren. They just want them out of Iraq.

"We don't want to kill them. If they leave we shall not attack them," said Mustafa Chawash, an Iraqi Kurd commander.

The PKK was putting up a strong fight, Mr. Khan said. "They are mostly children, and fighting with their fanaticism. They are also well dug in and it's difficult to attack defensive positions," he said.

The fighting could last for weeks, he said.

Some 25 million Kurds are dispersed to parts of Turkey, Iraq, Iran, Syria and the former Soviet Union, about half living in Turkey.

Since 1984, the PKK, led by Abdullah Ocalan, a 45-year-old former political science student believed to be residing in Damascus, has been waging a guerrilla war in Turkey's Kurdish-dominated southeast. Over 5,000 people have died in the fighting.

Despite the recent recognition of limited cultural rights to the Kurds, remaining restrictions have enabled the PKK to broaden its support in Turkey. The guerrillas have been relying on their ability to slip into neighbouring Syria, Iran and Iraq in attacking the vastly superior Turkish troops.

Turkish military officials put the PKK strength at 3,500 guerrillas inside Turkey and 4,500 others across its borders, mostly in Iraq. At least 150,000 Turkish troops are believed to be confronting them, reinforced in recent weeks by tanks, armoured vehicles and artillery along the border with Iraq.

Turkey recently signed security agreements with Syria and Iraq to deny logistic support to the insurgents.

It has played on the aspirations of the Iraqi Kurds for self-rule in gaining their reluctant support against the PKK.

With the West's military protection, the Iraqi Kurds have gained control of northern provinces after the Gulf war. The Kurdish parliament elected in May announced plans last week to make the Kurdish area a "federated state" within Iraq.

Depending heavily on Turkey as a chief source of supplies, a transit route for international help and a base for Western air protection, Iraqi Kurdish leadership bowed to Turkey's pressures to oust the PKK from the border area.

Meanwhile, Turkish jets Thursday pounded PKK positions at Gali Ingara, said Faisal Khartan Khan of the Baradust tribe, whose forces were in the fight against the Turkish Kurds.

"They scored direct hits at PKK headquarters and anti-aircraft gun emplacements," he said.

"We direct the Turkish aircraft on the targets with mortar shells which create a lot of smoke when they explode," he said.

Kurdish officials, speaking on condition of anonymity, also have said Turkish officers were in the area to direct Turkish artillery and air fire. Turkey has announced publicly it is helping the Iraqi Kurds.

Young Sudanese boys walk to seek refuge in Kenya

About 200 Sudanese boys have walked in the last 24 hours of what could be the last of their lives.

There reportedly are several thousand boys in a camp run by the rebel Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) in Pallatuka, where the insurgents claim they are caring for and schooling the youths.

Critics have accused the guerrillas of giving the boys military training for eventual recruitment into rebel ranks.

The 10,000 boys already in Kakuma are on the latest leg of a trek spurred by famine and warfare that shattered families and destroyed villages. Many of the boys fled Sudan for refugee camps in Ethiopia in the late 1980s during a severe drought. Tens of thousands reportedly died of starvation en route.

In June 1991, the camps were disbanded by new rulers in Ethiopia after they toppled that nation's dictator and refused support to Sudan's southern rebels who had bases in and around the camps.

The boys returned across the border into Sudan, living without parents but cared for by international aid agencies. They spent nearly a year stranded on a patch of dry land in a place called Gorkou, marooned by seasonal rains that turn much of Sudan's southeastern corner into a vast swamp.

Sudan's nine-year-old civil war pitting the government in Khartoum against southern guerrillas intensified early this year with government forces retaking more than a dozen rebel-held towns.

The fighting forced the boys to flee once again and they turned south to Kenya where UNHCR and the Lutheran World Federation has been caring for them.

In August, UNHCR reported that 3,000 of the boys were missing, and reportedly had returned to Sudan with the insurgents. Mr. Mountzias said the U.N. agency has been unable to find out anything about the boys whereabouts or wellbeing because of rebel interference and threats.

Mr. Mountzias said the new arrivals were the largest influx since May.



EMERGENCY CARE: A starving baby in hundreds of thousands in the Horn of Africa. Thousands have starved to death in the towns and efforts have been stepped up.

Group says U.N., Kenya neglected refugees

NAIROBI (AP) — A U.S. advocacy group claims deliberate neglect has killed up to 4,000 Somalis who fled to northeastern Kenya, but the government and the United Nations disputed the contention.

The Washington-based U.S. Committee of Refugees issued a statement Thursday claiming the "easily preventable" deaths occurred among the 70,000 refugees who have established squatter camps in Mandera and Al Wak.

"While refugee camps in other regions of Kenya receive assistance, Kenyan authorities and U.N. officials regard refugees at Mandera and Al Wak as opportunistic nomads and an unwanted burden in a region struggling to cope with drought," said the group in a statement sent to news organizations in Nairobi.

It claimed the refugees were denied tents, blankets, water containers, cooking utensils, plastic sheeting, camp sanitation and regular food distribution in an effort to discourage further arrivals.

The U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) "has been hoping these people will give up and crawl back across the border to whatever fate awaits them in Somalia," said the committee.

It said 2,000 to 4,000 refugees had "perished unnecessarily" since May. Its report was based on a recent three-week tour of refugee settlements by committee analyst Jeff Drummer.

Since the collapse of government in Somalia following the January 1991 ouster of dictator Mohammad Siad Barre, more than 400,000 refugees have fled to Kenya and are living in camps strung along the East African nation's drought-stricken eastern and northern borders.

Clan warfare has exacerbated the region's severe drought, causing a catastrophic famine in Somalia where more than 100,000 people already have died and two million are threatened.

UNHCR spokesman Panos Mountzias admitted Friday that the agency did not provide full assistance to the refugees when they first began crossing into Mandera in May, hoping to discourage further arrivals.

But he described the report as exaggerated.

Mr. Mountzias said there has been regular food distribution and 13 feeding centres for the last three months for what UNHCR estimates as 50,000-60,000 people in Mandera and Al Wak.

New judge assigned in Atlanta-Iraq loans case

ATLANTA (AP) — The bank fraud case against Christopher Drogoul, who is charged with hiding \$3.5 billion in illegal loans to Iraq, has been assigned to a new judge, U.S. District Judge G. Ernest Tidwell.

The assignment this week followed an order by U.S. District Judge Marvin Shubb removing himself from the case. Judge Shubb stepped down after federal prosecutors raised questions about his impartiality.

Mr. Tidwell and Mr. Shubb were appointed by President Jimmy Carter.

Mr. Drogoul, the former Atlanta branch manager of Italy's Banca Nazionale del Lavoro (BNL), was accused in a 347-count indictment of providing Iraq with unauthorized loans through a federal agricultural export programme. Some of the money allegedly was used by Iraq for weapons development before the Gulf war.

Mr. Drogoul pleaded guilty to 60 counts in June. Mr. Shubb heard three weeks of evidence in a sentencing hearing before voiding the plea agreement last week and setting the stage for a trial.

Mr. Shubb said the evidence at the hearing convinced him that, contrary to prosecution arguments, senior BNL officials in Rome authorized Mr. Drogoul's activities.

No pre-trial hearings have been scheduled yet for Mr. Drogoul, court officials said Friday.

The Washington Post reports: CIA Director Robert M. Gates has launched a broad internal investigation into what administration officials described as the agency's apparent failure to provide timely and accurate information to Congress and the Justice Department about a politically sensitive bank scandal.

Gates' move came as U.S. officials disclosed that the agency last week uncovered 1989 documents that cast new doubt on the government's longstanding contention that the scandal was solely caused by officials of the Atlanta branch of BNL.

The attorneys have alleged that the loans were authorised by Rome and that Washington has concealed evidence of Italian complicity to avoid embarrassing a key ally.

The newly discovered documents consist of a series of cables to Washington by the CIA's Rome station chief reporting evidence that officials in Rome had authorised some of the illicit loans from Atlanta, according to U.S. officials familiar with the papers. The officials asked not to be named.

The New York Times adds: The internal investigation "serves as an acknowledgement of a politically embarrassing error by the CIA on an issue that is dogging President Bush's re-election campaign: The administration's embrace of Saddam Hussein in the years before Iraq invaded Kuwait."

The CIA's public admission of error and promise to investigate were not spontaneous. It came only after Sen. David L. Boren, D-Okla., who heads the Senate Intelligence Committee, said on Oct. 6 that the CIA had misled the Justice Department, the Atlanta federal court and Congress.

Mr. Drogoul stressed that the Islamic Republic wants only to defend itself and "not to launch aggression against its neighbours."

He said that "enemies of Islam" — a clear reference to the United States and its allies — "are trying to deprive the Islamic Republic of its defensive power... to achieve their sinister goals."

Iran is currently locked in a dispute with the United Arab Emirates, and its Gulf Cooperation Council allies, over sovereignty of the strategic island of Abu Musa in the southern Gulf. Iran, which seized part of the island in 1971 and split sovereignty with the UAE emirate of Sharjah, virtually annexed the island last April.

MIDDLE EAST NEWS IN BRIEF

Libya merges 14 ministries into 6

TUNIS (R) The Libyan parliament has merged 14 ministries into six and transformed the Defence Ministry into a government department like any other, the official news agency JANA said. The process of nominating secretaries (ministers) to head the newly created ministries has started, it added. Under Libya's unique system of government, this takes place within the ministries, which are known as general people's committees. The General People's Congress, the Libyan equivalent of parliament, made the change at a meeting in the coastal town of Sirte, 370 kilometres east of Tripoli, on Wednesday and Thursday, JANA said. Since 1989 the armed forces have been the responsibility of a "general provisional committee for defence," a department which was listed separately from the ministries. The parliament has now created a general people's committee for defence, a title analogous to those of other ministries, and JANA included it on its regular government list. The parliament merged the oil and electricity ministries to create a single ministry of energy. The ministries of heavy industry and light industry merged in a new ministry of industry. A new ministry of planning, trade and finance combines the old ministries of treasury and of economic planning. Health and social security become the responsibility of a single ministry, as do utilities and public works as well as a communications and transport. Four ministries merge to form a new ministry of education and scientific research. JANA said the General People's Congress also created about 1,500 "communes" to be run by basic people's congresses, the local assemblies which theoretically decide all policy. It was not immediately clear what this change meant.

Iraq: Saudis bent on destabilising Yemen

BAGHDAD (R) — Iraq's ruling Baath Party has said Saudi Arabia was trying to destabilise Yemen through a wave of assassination attempts and bomb explosions. "Saudi rulers are behind the assassination attempts and acts of sabotage in sisterly Yemen and behind attempts to tear up its unity," the party's newspaper Al Thawra said. Yemen has not accused anyone for the blasts and attacks against several senior Yemeni officials, especially those from the formerly Marxist south, in many Yemeni towns in recent months. "The Saudi rulers, who finance the traitors and the agents, have realised the danger which a united and politically stable Yemen could pose to their future and their conspiratorial schemes," Al Thawra said. The Baath daily said the failure of Saudi-Yemeni border talks in Riyadh early this month was due to Saudi insistence that the disputed oil-rich areas were part of Saudi territory. It said Saudi Arabia, with the world's largest oil reserves, needed no further oil or territory, "but a united and strong Yemen constitutes a threat to the ruling Saudi family." Saudi-Yemeni relations deteriorated because of Sanaa's sympathetic attitude towards Baghdad after Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in August 1990. Al Thawra said the anti-Yemen position adopted by the Saudi rulers was due to Yemen's "national attitudes and its sound judgment concerning the pan-Arab action."

Dayan in bikini creates storm

TEL AVIV (R) — Moshe Dayan's daughter has kicked up a political storm in Israel by sunbathing in a bikini on Yom Kippur, the holiest day in the Jewish calendar. Yael Dayan, 53, a Labour member of parliament, was photographed on a Tel Aviv beach Wednesday and the tabloid newspaper Hadashot published the picture Thursday. Labour parliamentarians accused Dayan of desecrating Yom Kippur and urged her to apologise. Pious Jews spend Yom Kippur, the day of atonement, asking forgiveness by fasting and almost non-stop prayer. Ms. Dayan refused to apologise and said Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, who is not religious, "shouldn't tell his wife how to behave." "I don't do it because I drive a car on the Sabbath... I think that's hypocritical. You don't drive on the Sabbath because you are a prime minister? Where is faith here? You eat kosher when you eat outside home? When you're home you eat pork and shrimp," Ms. Dayan told Israel Radio in an interview Friday. In public, secular Israeli leaders observe the Jewish religious ban on eating pork and shellfish. They do not travel from Friday sundown to Saturday sundown, the Sabbath. While prime minister in 1976, Mr. Rabin was forced to break up his government with the National Religious Party in an uproar over the delivery of U.S. warplanes on the Jewish Sabbath. "I'll sure keep going to the beach on Yom Kippur," Ms. Dayan said. In former years she had driven to the beach, she added.

Turkey returns passport-less Iraqis to Greece

ANKARA (R) — Turkey returned 77 Iraqis to Greece Friday, despite Greek requests that the group, travelling without passports, be allowed to land at a southwestern Turkish port. A Foreign Ministry source said Friday. "The Greeks wanted to deliver the Iraqis here claiming they had originally arrived in Greece via Turkey, but had no way of proving this. We are not obliged to take in people without passports," the source told Reuters. Late Aytaman, governor of the Aegean province of Mugla, said the Greek passenger ferry Kostas had sailed back from Bodrum port Friday after Turkish officials refused Greek requests to let the group in. The ship had docked at Bodrum on Oct. 3 and had refused to leave despite the Turkish refusal to admit the Iraqis, she told the Anatolia news agency. Many northern Iraqi refugees make their way across the Turkish border without documents and risk clandestine sea crossing from Turkey's west coast to nearby Greek islands. Twenty-nine Iraqis were missing and presumed dead after a boat carrying them from Turkey capsized in the Aegean Sea last month. Foreign Ministry officials say they are cooperating with Athens to prevent the illegal passage attempts.

Assad meets Moroccan foreign minister

DAMASCUS (R) — Syrian President Hafez Al Assad and Moroccan Foreign Minister Abdul Latif Filali held discussions Friday on the Middle East peace process, officials said. They said Mr. Filali gave Mr. Assad a message from King Hassan and the Syrian president sent one in return. The officials gave no details. Syrian Foreign Minister Farouk Al Sharaa met the Moroccan monarch last week in Rabat. Diplomats said Morocco was making efforts to advance Arab-Israeli peace talks.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

IN TELEVISION

Tel: 773111-19

ME TWO

Rev. de d'enfants
Jeux de nos frontières
Le Scientifique Magazine
C'est le monde
Ne pas en faire
M. Knight Collier

LAVERTE MES

Pair
(Santé) Dina
Dina
Aur
Maghreb
Isha

CHURCHES

of Nazareth (Church Swedish)
of Geli Church, Tel.
of the Annunciation Tel.

In Church Tel. 661757
In Church Tel. 622366
of the Annunciation Tel.

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.

It will be fair and some clouds will appear at various altitudes. Winds will be northwesterly moderate. In Aqaba, winds will be northerly moderate and sea calm.

Min./Max. temp.
Amman 14 / 26
Aqaba 21 / 33
Dera 11 / 23
Jordan Valley 20 / 31

Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 25, Aqaba 32, Hattatid readings: Amman 31 per cent, Aqaba 32 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:
Dr. Salim Al Daboul 776751
Dr. Ramzi Mizzi 894788
Dr. Joseph Insh 770560
Dr. Saad Al 861912
Firdous pharmacy 778336
Al Aqaba pharmacy 637055
Nasrallah pharmacy 623672
Al Salam pharmacy 636730
Yacoub pharmacy 649493
Shimlani pharmacy 637660
Fifth circle pharmacy 813141
Sana pharmacy 661898
Tala pharmacy 621365
Ya'ish pharmacy 624425
Al Aqaba pharmacy 777712
Al Aqaba pharmacy 888881
Habib pharmacy 771957
HBB 771957
Dr. Amin Abu Eida 244468
Alqaba pharmacy (-)
ZARQA:
Dr. Rajeh Sagr 901280
Khalifa pharmacy 985417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111
Civil Defence Department 661111
Civil Defence (immediate) 630341
Civil Defence Emergency 199
Rescue Police 82, 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade 891228
Blood Bank 77121
Highway Police 843402
Traffic Police 896390
Public Security Department 63521
Hotel Complaints 603800
Price Complaints 661176
Water and Sewerage 897467
Complaints 787111
Telephone Information 121
Overseas Calls 610230
Central Amman Telephone 62101
Abdali Telephone Repairs 66101
Jordan Television 771111
Radio Jordan 680100
Jordan Electricity Authority 615615
Electric Power 636381
RU Flight Information 08-53300

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:
Haseh Medical Centre 818131/32
Khalid Maternity, J. Amn. 642816
Albaha Maternity, J. Amn. 642412
Jahel Amman Maternity 642662
Mafha, J. Amman 664171/4
Palestine, Shamsi 669131
University Hospital 84545
Al-Mustashfi Hospital 667277/9
The Islamic, Abdali 666127/37
Al-Ahli, Abdali 664164/6
Hassan, Al-Mohajir 771013
Al-Bashir, J. Abdali 773112/6
Army, Marja 891611/15
Queen Alia Hospital 602240/50
Amal Hospital 674155
ZARQA:
Zerga Govt. Hospital (09)83323
Zerga National Hospital (09)80360
Ibn Sina Hospital (09)80732
Al Hikma Modern Hospital (09)90909
ZARQA:
Princess Baysa Hospital (02)275555
Greek Catholic Hospital (02)27275
Ibn Al Nafoos Hospital (02)247100
AQABA:
Princess Haya Hospital (03)314111

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (05)5200-5, where it should always be verified.

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)
06:00 Jeddah (RJ)
06:10 Larnaca (RJ)
06:15 Aqaba (RJ)
06:30 Damascus (RJ)
06:30 Dubai, Abu Dhabi (RJ)
06:30 Doha, Bahrain (RJ)
06:45 Cairo (RJ)
06:50 New York, Amsterdam (RJ)
07:00 Brussels, Paris (RJ)
07:05 London (RJ)
07:10 Madrid, Geneva (RJ)
07:15 Antwerp, Istanbul (RJ)
07:20 Frankfurt, Vienna (RJ)
07:25 Rome, Athens (RJ)
07:30 Vienna (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

11:50 Moscow, Bahrain (GF)
13:40 Moscow (SU)
15:55 Larnaca (CY)
16:35 Cairo (EG)
16:35 Beirut (ME)

MARKET PRICES

DEPARTURES	Upper/lower price in fils per kg
Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)	
06:00 Damascus (RJ)	650 / 330
06:10 Aqaba (RJ)	550 / 430
06:15 Frankfurt (RJ)	450 / 350
06:30 Athens, Vienna (RJ)	400 / 300
06:30 Tunis, Casablanca (RJ)	350 / 250
06:30 Rome (RJ)	300 / 200
06:30 Ankara, Istanbul (RJ)	250 / 150
06:30 Amsterdam, New York (RJ)	200 / 100
06:45 Cairo (RJ)	150 / 50
06:50 New York, Amsterdam (RJ)	100 / 0
07:00 Brussels, Paris (RJ)	50 / 0
07:05 London (RJ)	0 / 0
07:10 Madrid, Geneva (RJ)	0 / 0
07:15 Antwerp, Istanbul (RJ)	0 / 0
07:20 Frankfurt, Vienna (RJ)	0 / 0
07:25 Rome, Athens (RJ)	0 / 0
07:30 Vienna (RJ)	0 / 0
Other Flights (Terminal 2)	
16:00 Beirut, Rome (A2)	550 / 50
16:00 Doha, Bahrain (GF)	500 / 50
16:00 Moscow (SU)	500 / 50
16:00 Larnaca (CY)	500 / 50

Cabinet approves rescheduling of debts

AMMAN (Petra) — The Cabinet Saturday approved an agreement reached between the Ministry of Finance and an Austrian bank on rescheduling Jordan's debts to Austria, totalling 177,312,988 Austrian schilling (about JD 10.67 million).

According to the agreement, the debts will be paid in 14 installments, one every six months. The first installment will be due March 31, 2001, and the last on Sept. 30, 2007. The interest rate on the rescheduled debt will be set according to the variable official rate, which will be fixed quarterly by the Austrian Exports Guarantee Corporation, in addition to 0.6 per cent as guarantee commission and 0.1 per cent as administrative expenses.

The Cabinet decided to authorise the finance minister to sign the agreement on behalf of the government.

The Council of Ministers also agreed that Jordan joins the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) as an observer and to allow the IOM to open an office in Amman.

The IOM will be implementing programmes pertaining to migration of nationals, foreigners and refugees.

The Cabinet also approved a recommendation by Interior Minister Jawdat Shouat on the formation of the Roman Catholic Church Court in Amman.

The recommendation, based on the 1977 law no. 38 on the non-Muslim religious sects councils, specifies that the court will be chaired by Father Ghaleb Badr and will include as members Fathers Issam Al Zu'mut, Jihad Shuweihat, Yacoub Hijazeen, Musa Adeli, Jibril Hijazeen and Youssef N'mat.

The Cabinet also approved the formation of the Roman Catholic Court in Jerusalem. The court will be chaired by Father Anton Issa and will include as members Fathers Boutros Arik, Kamel Bathish and Boutros Suleiman.



Her Majesty Queen Noor behind the wheel of a Mercedes Benz bus donated to the Noor Al Hussein Foundation Saturday by Elba House and T. Gargour and Fils Co. (photo by George - Crystal)

NHF gets new bus

AMMAN (J.T.) — Elba House and T. Gargour and Fils Co. Saturday donated a 29-passenger Mercedes bus to the Noor Al Hussein Foundation (NHF). The gift was received by Her Majesty Queen Noor in a ceremony attended by NHF President Issa'ud Muthi, Elba House owner Zuhair Khouri and Nadim Gargour, one of the owners of Mercedes Benz agency in Jordan. Elba House has been accredited by Mercedes as an important bus body builder in the Middle East and is the first of its kind in Jordan.

Minister gives go-ahead to government training centres

AMMAN (Petra) — The Ministry of Municipal and Rural Affairs and the Environment and the Cities and Villages Development Bank are to set up three centres in Jordan to offer training to heads of municipal and village councils and their staff.

The announcement was made Saturday by Minister of Municipal and Rural Affairs and the Environment Abdul Razzaq Tubetshat who said that the three centres to be set up in Irbid, Karak and Amman will be financed by the bank and the ministry.

Addressing heads of municipal and village councils in Amman, the minister discussed the importance of continued training courses for local councils' staff members who he said ought to learn about the municipal laws and regulations, and matters related to finance and management.

Dr. Tubetshat said that the training was of vital importance if the local councils are to be instrumental in promoting development of local communities.

Training at the three centres will benefit all staff members as well as the ministry and bank's employees.

Training courses, he added, require lectures on matters related to the management of municipal and village councils, field trips to "examine" local councils' activities and other related functions.

Also speaking at the meeting, Zuhair Khalifa Director General of the Cities and Villages Development Bank said that the training courses conform to the government's directives of upgrading the standard of employees working for government and semi-governmental institutions.

The ministry and the bank are planning short and long-term courses designed to improve the functions of local councils, Dr. Khalifa said.

Since 1986, the bank has organised a series of training courses in financial, technical and administrative matters related to local councils and attended by 4,828 employees.

Jordanian wins letter-writing competition

AMMAN (Petra) — A Jordanian female student Mervat Jawarneh has won first prize in an international competition of Letter-Writing for the Young 1992.

Ms. Jawarneh, a student in the girls secondary school of Irbid in the Irbid governorate, received the award from Ministry of Post and Communications Secretary General Abdullah Al Jazi at a special ceremony in Amman.

After receiving the award Ms. Jawarneh announced that she would present it to His Majesty King Hussein on the occasion of his safe return home after surgical operations abroad.

Dr. Jazi also presented the girl with a stamps album and some stamps as a gift from the Ministry of Post and Communications to mark the universal postal day.

The award was organised by the Universal Postal Union (UPU) and the winners were chosen by a special committee from the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO).

The title of Ms. Jawarneh's winning entry was: "Letter from a seaman accompanying Christopher Columbus to a child living in the 20th century."

This year marks the 500th anniversary of Columbus's discovery of the new world.

Improved trade seen as thaw in Jordanian-Saudi relations

By Nermeen Murad
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Eighty per cent of Jordan's pre-Gulf war trade with Saudi Arabia has been recovered over the past nine months, and private traders are expected to continue efforts to restore the Kingdom's traditional markets in the Gulf states, said Mohammad Astour, chairman of the Federation of Jordanian Chambers of Commerce.

In an interview with the Jordan Times Saturday, Mr. Astour, who is also the president of the Amman Chamber of Commerce, said that Jordan's trade with Saudi Arabia "has increased from zero to eighty per cent (of the pre-Gulf war level) in the past nine months," but added that more effort and meetings were needed before the country could recover its traditional markets in the Gulf.

"As a trade sector, we are obviously trying to contribute to a thaw in relations between our brothers in Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states," Mr. Astour said.

But although the increase in trade is an apparent indication of change in the political atmosphere between Jordan and its powerful Saudi neighbour, Mr. Astour said that the Saudi and Jordanian private sectors were

trying to establish a relationship which is independent from the official political climate and "one that is not affected by political statements on either side."

A senior official, who requested anonymity, said that while Jordan was looking for reconciliation with Saudi Arabia and other Gulf states, this improvement in economic relations was "purely the result of efforts by the private sector."

However, the official said that Jordan saw Saudi Arabia as "the key to improved Arab-Arab relations" and was going to continue efforts to bridge political differences and tensions between the two countries.

Privately, officials say that this apparent return to normal trade relations with Saudi Arabia is a healthy side-road into normalisation of political relations, but that it was too early to make concrete statements on the political element.

Mr. Astour said that private traders will invite as many traders from Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states as possible to visit Jordan and discuss ways to improve trade.

He said that the head of the Qatari Chamber of Commerce has asked to visit Jordan at the head of a team of traders and that



Mohammad Astour

his request will be welcomed and encouraged by Jordanians.

"The response from most countries has been positive and there has been enthusiasm from all sides to by-pass political obstacles in the way of such meetings," Mr. Astour said.

He also revealed that there has been interest expressed from the Saudi private sector in investments in Jordan and legislation regulating it.

"We have legislations that encourage investments in Jordanian projects and we might be seeing an increase in Saudi capital invested in these projects," Mr. Astour said.

Deal with Lebanon expected to bolster exports

By Laney Salisbury
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Lebanese Ambassador to Jordan Ahmed Ibrahim hailed the trade agreement signed between Jordan and Lebanon last week as a stepping stone for more protocols to come.

"We (Lebanon) consider this agreement as a beginning and it will encourage us to have other agreements in different fields like tourism, transport, transit and culture," Mr. Ibrahim said in a recent interview with the Jordan Times.

Under the seven point agreement, Jordan and Lebanon will reduce or eliminate customs duties on several types of goods exchanged.

Tariffs on textiles, that previously ranged from 40 per cent to 100 per cent per product, will be reduced by one-third, and custom duty and quotas on agricultural products will be eliminated completely. The only restriction

is that Jordanian fruits and vegetables can only be exported when they do not conflict with Lebanon's season for the same products.

Livestock and natural resources such as phosphate, potash and minerals from the Dead sea are also exempt from taxes.

"The new agreement is going to open more avenues of trade between the two countries. It will help Jordan's exports of agricultural and industrial products," said Hassan Hindawi, Director of Economic Cooperation and Export Promotion at the Ministry of Industry and Trade.

According to the Department of Statistics, Jordan exported about JD 10 million worth of goods to Lebanon in 1991, up from about JD 1 million in 1988 when Lebanon was still wracked by civil war.

In 1991, Lebanon exports to Jordan valued about JD 21 million, up from JD 7.9 million in

1988.

According to Mr. Hindawi, Jordan does not have a similar trade agreement with any other country in the region.

"Jordan has more in common with Lebanon than with any other Arab country. We have the same philosophy, that of a free market," Mr. Hindawi said.

Conditions are built into the agreement to promote Lebanese-Jordanian trade and slash imports from abroad. One condition is that only products that have a local input of more than 40 per cent will in terms of labour and raw products etc. will receive a one-third tax reduction.

Lebanon and Jordan will also have an annual trade fair where businesses can sell up to \$5 million worth of goods tax free, although a clause states that no more than 3 per cent of the sales can be of one product.

"Jordan knows about Lebanon's products but Lebanon doesn't know about Jordan's,"

Mr. Hindawi said, adding that the Kingdom has about 5,000 industrial companies, less than Lebanon.

Under the wide-ranging agreement, that also include technology, tourism, and economic cooperation, a joint committee will be established to increase exports to third world countries, to promote joint ventures and to review the effectiveness of the protocol.

"I think that the Jordanian industry is of very good quality and I think they can manufacture goods more cheaply than us. Our factories and industries have been destroyed by the war and we need Jordan's trade," Mr. Ibrahim said.

India is the biggest importer of Lebanese goods, followed by Arab Common Market (ACM) member states and Jordan. Jordan imports mainly from the European Community states, followed by ACM countries, the United States and Lebanon.

Food coupon fraud — four suspects referred to attorney general

AMMAN (J.T.) — Four employees working for the Ministry of Supply have been referred to the attorney general for investigation into alleged mis-handling of food coupons, according to a report in the local press Saturday.

Minister of Supply Mohammad Al Saqqaf took the decision after an inspection team touring coupon distribution centres discovered that the suspects were stealing coupons and distributing them for their own profit.

The inspection teams were called when the Ministry of Supply became suspicious that all of their coupons were not accounted for, the report said. The suspects, all working at the same distribution centre, were allegedly keeping coupons not claimed by their owners.

It was in the wake of the Gulf crisis in 1990 that the Ministry of

Supply introduced the food coupon and rationing system to ensure the Kingdom's supplies would not be snatched abroad.

The coupons purchase sugar, rice and powdered milk at reduced prices subsidised by the government.

And the system is designed for Jordanian citizens alone which means that foreign nationals, hotels and other organisations do not benefit from the subsidy.

The minister was quoted by Al Ra'i Arabic daily as saying that strict measures will be taken against the suspects whose case will be referred to court.

Mr. Saqqaf said that he hoped such practices would not recur because the ministry will take severe measures against anyone trying to tamper with public funds.

JPDP applies for recognition

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Jordan People's Democratic Party (JPDP) Saturday formally submitted an application to the Ministry of Interior to establish itself as a legitimate political party.

A statement by JPDP's office in Amman said that a group from the party's leadership called at the Ministry to submit the application together with a list of its constituent members who live in various governorates of the Kingdom.

The JPDP is the seventh party to submit an application to the ministry since Oct. 1st.

Their membership includes JPDP's Secretary General Tayseer Al Zibri and his Deputy Bassam Haddadin along with Salem Nabhas, Hussein Abu Rumman and Balah Al Abu Ulayy from their political bureau.

The JPDP claims that it has existed in Jordan since 1974. It held its first National Convention in July of 1989.

Arafat leaves after five-day visit

(Continued from page 1)

and Dr. Habash's opposition.

"Dr. Habash made it clear to Mr. Arafat that the PFLP remains very much opposed to the peace talks in their present form and content and will continue to voice his rejection of imposed solutions on the Palestinian people," said one of the sources.

Mr. Arafat met with Dr. Habash in Amman last Wednesday as part of his ongoing efforts to reunify PLO ranks ahead of the resumption of peace talks with Israel in Washington on Oct. 21.

The PFLP was one of the leading groups in 10-faction Palestinian coalition which issued a headline statement last month rejecting the Palestinian self-rule plan being discussed with Israel and urging the Arafat-guided Palestinian negotiators to quit the peace talks.

Dr. Habash told the Reuters news agency Friday that he did not find any change of mind in Mr. Arafat.

"I haven't felt until this moment Abu Ammar has in his mind a fundamental change," he was quoted as saying. "But we hope that with continued activity of the 10 factions a common Palestinian will crystallise enough that the official leadership of the PLO cannot but take its view into account."

Mr. Arafat was expected to fly to Damascus from Amman for talks with the Syrian leadership as well as leaders of some of the factions which endorsed last month's call in an effort to avert further schism in the Palestinian ranks. Instead, he flew to Tunis from Amman.

There was no immediate explanation for the cancellation of

the visit to Syria. Senior PLO officials said last week that Mr. Arafat was scheduled to go to Damascus after his visit to Amman.

One of the main themes for Mr. Arafat's talks with Syrian president Hafez Al Assad was expected to be Palestinian fears that Damascus might cut a separate deal with Israel without addressing the Palestinian problem.

During his stay in Amman, Mr. Arafat did not directly refer to fears of a Syrian-Israeli deal. But, in comments to Jordan Television, he affirmed the need for a "consolidate Arab stand" to counter Israel.

In his talks with Dr. Habash, the sources said, Mr. Arafat assured the PFLP leader that no Palestinian agreement will be concluded with Israel without the approval of the PNC, the Palestinian parliament-in-exile, and that "no Palestinian rights will be surrendered."

The PLO chairman also said that "all Palestinian groups will be kept fully informed of the talks," said the source, noting that no PLO faction represented in the PCC has indicated that it would stay away from next week's meeting in Tunis.

Published statements of the PFLP and the democratic Front for the Liberation of Front (DFLF) led by Nayef Hawatme as well as other Palestinian factions inside and outside the PLO umbrella, indicate that the 10-member coalition believes that opposition to the peace talks is growing among the Palestinians in the occupied territories.

This point was emphasised by Dr. Habash during last week's talks. "The Palestinian masses, whether in the occupied territories or outside, do not support any

surrendering of the national legitimate rights of the Palestinian people, including their right of return and the right to set up an independent state," said the source.

But sources in Fateh, the largest PLO faction and Mr. Arafat's power-base, and independent observers reject this contention.

"On overwhelming majority of the Palestinians supports the peace process and the PLO approach to the peace talks," said a Fateh official.

According to independent observers, Mr. Arafat's main concern is over the position of the PFLP. "Other groups in the 10-member coalition have only a marginal role," said one observer.

The observer noted that the DFLP, which dominates Palestinian women's movements, was split in the middle between Mr. Hawatme and his rival Abed Rabbo, Hamas, the fundamentalist Islamic movement which is challenging the PLO leadership in the occupied territories and another signatory to last month's call, is not a PLO faction.

"That leaves seven groups which have very little presence in the occupied territories and have a marginal role in Palestinian politics," said the observer.

Qatari soldier

(Continued from page 1)

Saudi Arabia said it was a clash between nomadic bedouins from both countries and denied its troops were involved or that they entered Qatari territory.

Saudi bedouins said the Qatari soldier was captured by the Mura tribe after a clash with Qatari border guards who crossed into their tribal land in Saudi Arabia to extend the Khofous border post.

Conference hopes to turn Jordan green

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Jordanian Society for the Control of Environmental Pollution (JSCEP) is organising a conference on organic agriculture on Monday to promote public awareness of the need to protect the environment.

The symposium organised in cooperation with the Friedrich Naumann Foundation, will be part of a national campaign by the Society who seek to reduce levels of pollution in Jordan.

An official from JSCEP said that the meeting will be attended by up to 150 agricultural engineers and farmers as well as representatives of relevant government ministries, university departments, and voluntary organisations.

The subject of organic agriculture as a substitute for conventional agricultural methods will be discussed along with a host of other topics that will focus on reducing the intensive use of chemicals in farming. The participants will also study the use and misuse of fertilisers, of chemicals to combat pests, and means of employing treated waste water agricultural purposes.

According to an expert from the University of Jordan, "organic agriculture" refers to agriculture without the use of artificial fertilisers.

The society official said that the conference also aims at increasing ties between Society members and farmers in the fight against soil contamination.

FALL SHOPPING

A collection of uniquely hand crafted home furnishing, fashion accessories and traditional products:

Quilts ★ Cushions ★ X-mas items ★ Picture frames ★ Lamp shades ★ Leather handbags ★ Canvas tote bags ★ Natural olive oil soap ★ Collector's dolls ★ Food ★ Embroidered fashionwear ★

At the Marriott Hotel from Sunday Oct. 11th to Friday Oct. 16th, 10-8 p.m.

WHAT'S GOING ON

Exhibitions

- ★ Exhibition of paintings and sculptures by artist Nadeem at the French Cultural Centre.
- ★ National industries exhibition which includes electric appliances, carpets, food supplies, chemical detergents, clothes, paints and other items at Al Hassan Sports Stadium in Irbid.
- ★ Exhibition of oil and watercolour paintings entitled "Concepts in the Structure of Space" by Dr. George Sayegh at Abdel Hameed Shoman Foundation Gallery — (Open 10 a.m. till 5 p.m.)
- ★ Art exhibition by Ahmad Nawash at Alla Art Gallery.

THE AL-HUSSEIN SOCIETY FOR THE REHABILITATION OF THE PHYSICALLY HANDICAPPED

Wishes to express its appreciation and grateful thanks to the management and employees of the Marriott Hotel for their splendid organisation of the Thursday, October 8th fun train-ride fund raising day. It was truly a day to remember. A special thank you is extended to all who participated to make the day a success.

Jordan Times

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Jordan Press Foundation,
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Telephones: 667171/6, 670141-4

Telex: 21497 ALRAI JO

Facsimile: 661242

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Other side first

THE UNPRECEDENTED show of support by Jordanians for Al Amal Cancer Centre Friday is not only a magnificent expression of the people's deep commitment to humanitarian causes but also a moving experience, new to our society. The several millions reportedly pledged for the project are a living testimony of where the public stands on issues affecting the health and welfare of our citizens. Particularly moving was the army of young Jordanian volunteers roaming the streets in search of contributions with tremendous enthusiasm and dedication.

Yet this demonstration of care and humanity for the eradication and treatment of cancer calls for a reciprocal response from the government, not so much in terms of equal financial investment but rather in the demonstration of a stronger will to prevent the spread of the deadly disease among Jordanians. There is little sense in spending millions on building medical institutions for the treatment of cancer if the central government remains lax in its cancer preventive measures across the board. With water and basic agricultural products still suspected of being contaminated, all efforts to construct multi-million structures would remain incomplete and would lack meaning.

There is hardly a visible campaign to alert the people to the increasing rate of cancer incidences in the country, due to a variety of reasons; especially those which could be avoided and prevented with the application of a more stringent control over pollution.

Friday's novel and magnificent show to collect funds for the Amal Centre would have been that much more meaningful had it carried the double message of cancer prevention and cancer treatment at the same time.

With tobacco smoking still rampant even in public places where it is actually illegal, and with our air, food and water continuing to be polluted and contaminated by black smoke and chemicals and pesticides, all efforts to treat cancer would remain suspect in our eyes. In economic terms, not to mention human suffering, it would be infinitely less costly to prevent the disease from spreading than to try to heal it even with the state of the art medical technology. Unless and until this dimension of the equation is dealt with sensibly, the country's sense of priority in this vein would not be right. In Jordan, the people are ready to do their bit as evidenced on Friday. It is now the government's turn to reciprocate this generosity and positive reaction by the public by doing what is necessary for cancer awareness and prevention throughout.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

AL RA'I Arabic daily Saturday commented on the United Nations refusal of an Iraqi request to delay sending inspection teams to Baghdad next week to continue dismantling the country's long range missile arsenal. The U.N. committee in charge of the inspection is persistent in its position and does not agree to any delay while Iraq wants to delay the inspectors' visit and task until after the U.S. presidential elections because President George Bush might benefit from this mission to boost his image in the race to the White House, said the paper. By being so obstinate, the U.N. committee is not serving anyone because such an intransigent position could cause another crisis between the Iraqi government and the U.N. organisation, the paper said. The same committee had been behind the crisis that arose over the inspection of the Iraqi agriculture ministry and which ended with the discovery that the building contained nothing that could be considered as military secret, recalled the daily. The paper said that the U.N. committee's position can best be described as a provocative move that can benefit no party because it could create another crisis. The paper called on the U.N. committee to reconsider its position and take into consideration Baghdad's request for the brief delay which can harm no one but which can stop Mr. Bush from exploiting the inspection to improve his image in the current U.S. presidential campaign. It said that the delay of the inspectors' mission is not impossible if the concerned parties harbour good intentions.

COMMENTING ON the success of the charity week which culminated Friday with the announcement that more than JD 4 million have been collected for the construction of Al Amal Cancer Centre, a columnist in Al Dustour called for further steps on the part of the concerned organisations to ensure continued service to the cancer patients once the centre has been set up. Mohammad Kawash said that Friday and the whole last week witnessed an embodiment of solidarity among the Jordanian people who rose together in support of the projected centre which would give hope to thousands of people suffering from the killer disease. The writer said that the day is nearing for the completion of the centre, thanks to the generous contributions of people and organisations in Jordan and all the institutions and volunteers who helped to make the campaign a real success. But, the writer said, the centre will be in continuous need for contributions or income from any sources in order to ensure its continued operations. The writer suggested that the government introduce measures by which it imposes extra charges on cigarette prices and on factories whose chimneys emit poisonous fumes and channel the extra charges to Al Amal Cancer Centre. The writer, furthermore, suggested that the General Union of Voluntary Societies (GUVS) and the national commission supervising the contribution campaign organise similar events on fixed days each year. By doing this, he said, people can be assured of continued flow of contributions that would ensure continued treatment services to the patients.

Sunday's Economic Pulse

Treasury to save JD90 million in 1993

THE AIM of the Jordanian economic adjustment programme is to rid Jordan of the big and persistent budget deficit. The budget deficit is considered the main reason for all weaknesses and distortions in the Jordanian economy, including the deficit in the current account of the balance of payments, the excess of private and public consumption, relative to gross domestic product (GDP), and the huge burden of foreign indebtedness. In one sweeping judgment: The budget deficit is responsible for most if not all of the imbalances and distortions that the Jordanian economy experiences and it needs corrective measures.

The programme started from the point that the deficit of the budget in the base year 1991 amounted to 17.5 per cent of GDP, a very high percentage. The job of eliminating this gap was divided over seven years, at an average reduction rate of 2.5 per cent of GDP every year. If this plan is carried out, the fiscal deficit in the Jordanian budget will disappear in 1998. Jordan will then gain its financial independence and will become financially self-sufficient for the first time in its modern history.

According to the latest IMF estimates, the deficit in the budget will be reduced by 4.5 per cent of GDP in the current year 1992. The performance will therefore exceed the targets set by the

programme which some observers labelled as too ambitious or unattainable. Now the targets of the programme appear to be practical and feasible.

The extra performance was not solely attributable to improving revenues and controlling expenditures. Only 2.5 per cent of GDP was achieved through these means as envisaged by the programme, while the additional 2 per cent of GDP came from non-recurring sources, the most important of which were a customs duty on the cars of the expatriate returnees, around JD50 million; and fees collected in lieu of flag service, around JD10 million.

The new target for fiscal effort in 1993 will be to reduce the deficit in the budget by a further 2.5 per cent of GDP. But in view of the overperformance in 1992, one percentage point of reduction will be acceptable in 1993.

This means that the finance minister will be required to reduce expenses and/or increase revenue by 3 per cent of GDP of which 2 per cent are meant to make up for the sources that will not recur in 1993, and another 1 per cent as listed in the programme for each year, until 1998, adjusted in view of the extra performance in 1992.

In other words, the finance minister has the formidable duty of

finding out an extra amount of JD90 million during 1993, other than by borrowing, of which JD50 to 60 million is needed to replace the one time duty on returnees' cars and flag service fees, which do not apply in 1993, and the balance of JD30 to 40 million to achieve a further reduction of deficit by enhancing revenues and suppressing expenditures.

So far, the Ministry of Finance used a variety of means to increase revenue. Each time the ministry was met with an outcry and a wave of criticism and resistance. However, if people want the programme to succeed and Jordan to gain its real independence and not remain dependent on foreign aid and the good will of donors for ever, they have to get used to these measures.

Of course there is room to reduce capital expenditure, which was unnecessarily high in the budget of 1992, but that reduction alone would not be sufficient. There is still a need to widen the base of tax collection and reduce certain expenses, including subsidies.

The budget of 1993 will not be an easy document to plan. It is not enough to have a hard-nosed minister of finance to push forward and pave the way. It takes also an understanding Parliament, a well-informed press and responsible politicians and public opinion-makers to make the plan work.

Maronites' boycott of the elections: Last-ditch effort and political gaffe

By G.H. Jansen

"Christian" Lebanon is now Muslim and is well on the way to becoming a Shiite-led country; that is the one clear, simple fact that has emerged from the recent general election, (in which voting for the last five Maronite seats will take place on 11 October).

The seats in the 128-member parliament are now, for the first time, divided equally between Christians and Muslims, but everyone knows that that is a fudge so that the Christians, especially the once-dominant Maronites, do not get too alarmed because of the changing balance of power. This is the Christians' last hurrah. The next parliament will be voted in on the one-man-one-vote principle and that will produce a Muslim majority.

The demographic picture is clear: The population of Lebanon now numbers about 2.7 million, down one million since before the civil war, due to emigration, and of that 2.7 million one million are Shiites, who are now the largest single community (all the Lebanese communities are minorities).

The Muslims constitute 65 per cent and the Christians 35 per cent, of which 18 per cent overall are Maronites and 14 per cent

Greek Orthodox.

And yet, till the 1989 Taif Agreement that ended the Lebanese civil war, the Maronites ran Lebanon. They had a monopoly hold on the following positions: The president of the republic, the commander-in-chief, head of military intelligence, head of civil intelligence, chief justice, head of the court of appeal, governor of the central bank. Little wonder that they thought of Lebanon as "theirs" and because it was theirs it was the "Land of Light" and also, notoriously, the land of violence, bloodshed and cruelty.

Therefore, it is understandable that the loss of such a massive privilege should make the Maronites, normally eaten up by a minority psychosis, more than ever unstable, either arrogant or incurably fearful.

To crown it all, the Maronites are now realising that their last big political effort, the boycotting of the elections, was a terrible mistake, ostensibly because of Syrian interference, but in reality because they want to sabotage the new parliament which will strip the Maronites of their reserved privileges. No other

community followed the Maronite boycott because the Greek Orthodox, the Sunni Muslims, the Shiites and the Druze, all voted. Even many Maronites voted because of the 24 Maronite seats there were normal elections for 14. The Maronite militants made frantic efforts to stop any respectable Maronites standing for the forthcoming election in the Kesrouan constituency, in the heart of the Maronite heartland, on October 11. But the militants failed and very respected personalities are standing.

The futile gesture of the Maronite boycott has only meant that the strongest of the Maronite leaders are not in parliament but those of the Muslims are, including 15 militants, two Sunnis and the rest Shiites representing Hizbollah directly or its allies. More fearful than ever, now the Maronites are continuing to emigrate and every day long queues form outside Western consulates, even though several of these have announced that they cannot accept any more Lebanese.

This exodus is not necessarily a bad thing for Lebanon. The smaller the Maronite element in the country, the happier it will be

because the disgruntled Maronites are simply not prepared to accept the new Lebanon that the 15 year civil war has produced; they are not prepared to accept the hard fact that they lost that war (largely because of self-inflicted wounds) and consequently that their position in the country is much diminished.

Happily, the Maronite militias are no longer able to challenge the new order violently. Thanks to the overbearing presence of the Syrian army, these and other militias have been disarmed, at least of their heavy weapons. But more importantly, the Maronite community is divided against itself and lacks the will to fight and obstruct, except for one Maronite leader who remains dangerous because he is popular: ex-General Michel Aoun, exiled to France after the failure of his attempt to usurp the position of president. For all too many Maronites he remains their last hope, their "man on a white horse" who will one day come galloping to their rescue and save them, above all, from the Syrians.

But since this is an insubstantial hope, as the Maronite extremists, no longer able to domin-

ate the whole of Lebanon, are talking of splitting the country into cantons, so that they can still be in charge of their own much-reduced Maronistan.

Mr. Aoun is whipping up Maronite hopes and fears in statements from France which violate the agreement under which he was permitted to leave Lebanon. Grassroots support for Mr. Aoun was strong enough to pressure even the Maronite patriarch into giving his support to the boycott of the election. If the Maronites are frustrated, so too are the militant supporters of Hizbollah, the pro-Iranian Shiite militia which held the Western hostages. This is because as a party which is now in parliament, Hizbollah has to behave responsibly and moderately; the political game has "tamed" Hizbollah, it is said. Once the new government is formed in a few weeks time, it is expected that the Lebanese army will move into the southern suburbs of Beirut, Hizbollah's stronghold, where it "imprisoned" the hostages. The militia units still there will be disarmed with Hizbollah agreement which means that it will lose its power base in the Beirut area but not its political base. Its power base will re-

main in southern Lebanon where it will not be disarmed until there is peace with Israel, because Hizbollah's continuing attacks on the Israeli occupation zone is a national duty.

Because of all this political uncertainty the economic recovery of the country is stalled. Investments, even by rich Lebanese, abroad and international aid are simply not forthcoming. The World Bank is talking about granting Lebanon \$150 million next year, but the U.N. estimates that Lebanon will need \$1.5 billion annually for the next five years. The poverty in Lebanon is so widespread that the government refused to publish a report on poverty that it itself had commissioned because the facts were too alarming. But how can the Lebanese economy produce its famous "bounce" when the electricity, telephone and telefax systems do not work (and larger and larger piles of garbage befoul the potholed streets)?

"Have the Lebanese lost their national self-confidence and self-respect for ever or for a number of years to come? Yes, perhaps, as a multi-faith country, but probably not as a Muslim country," Middle East International.

Abortion rights movement watches East Europe, United States

By Clare Nullis
The Associated Press

GENEVA — Abortion used to be an almost routine form of birth control in much of Eastern Europe. But as new political, social and religious realities take shape in the post-communist era, a woman's right to an abortion is under attack.

The trend worries abortion rights activists in Western Europe, where — with the exception of Ireland — early abortion is readily available. They fear changes in Eastern Europe could lead to renewed battles over abortion in the West.

The picture in the East is not uniform, however.

In Romania and Albania — where all forms of contraception were previously banned by hard-line regimes intent on increasing the population — the number of legal abortions reportedly is rising. In Estonia, economic hardship since independence from Moscow has brought an increase in abortions.

But in Poland, the legislature appears likely to make it harder to get abortions. And abortion

foes also are strong in Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Slovenia and Lithuania.

Abortion rights supporters say any clampdown in Eastern Europe will be a step in the wrong direction, especially since contraceptives are scarce and often unreliable. They argue it is part of a worrying deterioration in the status of women, also reflected in declining numbers of female legislators in Eastern European nations.

"Women's rights are dropping from the political agenda," said Jolanta Plakwicz of the Polish Feminist Association, a participant at a European conference on abortion and contraception in late September.

The conference in Geneva drew 184 supporters of abortion rights from 28 countries. It discussed a list of demands, including the right of women to have access to all medically approved methods of abortion, improved sex education and free access to contraception.

"Everybody thinks we should have fewer abortions," said the conference's organizer, Anne-Marie Rey of the Swiss Union for Decriminalising Abortion. "The

only way to achieve this is through better sex education, and more contraception."

There are no figures on the total number of abortions in Europe, although most experts say it is stabilising or decreasing in Western Europe.

The rate of abortion in the United States is higher than many other developed countries. Marie Bass, a lobbyist with the Washington-based Reproductive Health Technology Product, cited estimates that there were 1.6 million abortions in the United States in 1988.

A string of supreme court rulings — including the latest one that left the way open for states to introduce more restrictive legislation — worries the abortion rights movement in the United States and Europe.

"There is the feeling that the United States had the best law and West Europe was following in that direction," Ms. Bass said in an interview at the conference.

"Now this is being reversed and there is a lot of anxiety that if the United States retreats on abortion then this could have an impact on the direction of Europe," Beatrijs Stermerding, of the

Dutch group Women's Global Network for Reproductive Rights, said predominantly Roman Catholic Poland is likely to take the toughest stance, with a proposed ban on abortions and imprisonment for any doctors involved.

Abortion was available almost on demand in Poland under a law passed in 1956. But many state-run hospitals now refuse to carry out abortions in anticipation of the new law and medical code of ethics, and prices in private clinics have soared.

Polish women now are going to Czechoslovakia, Lithuania and Germany for abortions, Ms. Plakwicz said.

As a result of privatisation, many Polish pharmacies stock contraceptives. However, they are rarely advertised and it is difficult to find out how safe and effective they are, she said. Only an estimated 4 per cent of Poles use contraception.

Ms. Stermerding said increasing pressure from the anti-abortion movement — often with financial backing from American groups — and the Catholic Church is likely to lead to more restrictive

laws in Hungary, Czechoslovakia and Slovenia.

However, a Lithuanian expert, Dr. Alina Zvinkliene, said women themselves are increasingly rejecting abortion, although it remains a common method of birth control.

And, she said, even women who support the right to an abortion are busy trying to hold down jobs and run families and have neither the energy nor inclination to join feminist movements.

The government is still diverted by economic problems so there's not yet much discussion about new abortion laws," she said in an interview. "But the Catholic Church is strong and pressure will grow to restrict abortion. We may face a threat of prohibition by as early as next spring."

In Western Europe, Scandinavians traditionally have the most liberal laws, and the state often foots the bill. In France, the controversial abortion pill, RU-486, is available under medical supervision. Plans to bring Western German laws into line with

more relaxed Eastern German ones are currently being challenged in the courts.

Catholic nations like Spain and Portugal have restrictions on abortions for non-medical reasons. In Ireland there is an outright ban on abortions and on information about overseas clinics.

"It doesn't matter if you're raped, a victim of incest or a minor of 12 years old," said Rita Burtenshaw of the Dublin Well Woman Centre. "In 1992 in Ireland, abortion is illegal."

In a much-publicised case earlier this year, Ireland's supreme court overturned an attempt by authorities to stop a 14-year-old girl, who was allegedly raped, from going to Britain for an abortion. The court said her life would otherwise be in danger because she was suicidal.

About 4,000 Irish women travel to England every year to end their pregnancy.

Irish Prime Minister Albert Reynolds has promised a referendum on abortion, possibly in late November.

LETTERS

Former director honoured

To the Editor:

WE REFER to your report regarding a royal decoration conferred on Mr. Najeeb Fakhoury by the chargé d'affaires of the Royal Netherlands embassy. (Jordan Times, Oct. 5, 1992). We would like to state the following: Mr. Fakhoury was the general manager of KLM in Jordan and was retired effective Dec. 31, 1991. Mr. Murli Poonath has been appointed as his successor. We take this opportunity to congratulate Mr. Fakhoury on his accomplishments.

Murli Poonath,
District Manager-Jordan,
KLM Royal Dutch Airlines,
Amman.

Editor's note: The "report" referred to in the above letter was in fact an advertisement. This letter, which also appeared yesterday, is being repeated since, due to a proof-reading error, one line was missing, leading to a distorted meaning.

Reuter

Ghetto fear of Ethiopian Jews

By Miriam Jordan

HULDA, Israel — Far from schools and jobs in their promised land, thousands of Ethiopian Jews languish in caravan parks on the edge of the desert that their leaders fear are becoming black ghettos.

None of the 14,000 black Jews flown to Israel in a 22-hour airlift in May last year have moved into permanent housing. About 1,000 remain in hostels and the rest are still in caravan camps isolated from Israeli society.

They rarely encounter native Israelis and practise broken Hebrew only with welfare office clerks and social workers. Community leaders fear social calamity and want something done.

"The caravan camps are like ghettos," said Rahamin Elazar, a leading Ethiopian. "To outsiders, Israel will be considered a racist country because of isolating these

black Jews."

The camps were to be a temporary solution for the flood of immigrants. But it will take years before the government can provide apartments for them all.

"It's dirty, there's no infrastructure, no playground. It's a modern Soweto, I'm sad to say," said Mr. Elazar, comparing his camp to the South African black township.

"There's no violence so far. But I can't vouch for the future," he said.

Domestic tensions run high, divorce is common. Unemployment tops 50 per cent among caravan residents, unable to get jobs because they lack skills and live far from industrial centres.

"Unless Israel starts putting resources into housing and vocational training, it will create a whole welfare class, said Susan Pollack, vice-president of the American Association for Ethio-

pian Jewry, which devises training schemes for Ethiopians.

"People want to work. They don't want to sit around."

One hot September afternoon at Hulda caravan park, a dozen bored middle-aged men crouched under a tree. Women sat on the steps of their caravans, some weaving baskets to supplement their \$400 monthly family welfare cheque.

The dusty site is on the edge of the desert in south-central Israel, far from the nearest town.

"In the summer it's boiling hot and terrible. In the winter it's freezing cold and terrible. I wish we had a normal place to live," said Maritesh Kandia, a mother of five.

About 1,300 Ethiopians who arrived in 1991 on Operation Solomon in 400 caravans arranged in rows across the sand.

Ms. Kandia and others complained of isolation and of their

children's two-hour journey to school in Jerusalem.

"I don't give them breakfast in the morning so they won't vomit on the bus from the bumpy ride. They are exhausted by the time they arrive home," said Ms. Kandia, 29.

Former Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir's government was proud of putting thousands of Ethiopian families in caravans for a token rent. It was an easy solution to the housing squeeze and fulfilled a desire to settle sparsely populated areas.

The Ethiopians were promised permanent housing by May 1992 but the new government of Yitzhak Rabin says it will take at least three years.

Most of the 50,000 Ethiopian Jews now in Israel came in a 1984 airlift, Operation Moses, and some of them have still not left temporary state housing.

Reuter

مكتبة من الأصل

Seven years on — justice yet to be served

"And someday there will be justice." These were the words of Norma Odch when asked about the investigation being held on the assassination of her husband, Alex Odch, in 1985.



Alex Odch

Alex Odch was born in the Palestinian village of Jifna in 1944. He received his elementary education at Bir Zeit and his secondary education at Ramallah and Nablus. He studied economics and political science at the University of Cairo, and received his M.A. from Cal State in Fullerton, California. Alex Odch was the first West Coast regional director of the American Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee. He worked tirelessly to promote dialogue, to further an understanding of Americans of Arab heritage. He was a member of the Los Angeles County Human Relations Commission and the 1985-86 President of the Arab American Organisations Council in Southern California. He was elected as a member of the Coastline College Academic Senate.

On October 10, 1985, Alex Odch appeared on an ABC news affiliate where he praised Mr. Yasser Arafat for his role in mediating the release of the Achille Lauro hostages, calling him "a man of peace." The next morning, October 11, 1985, a bomb ripped through the Santa Ana AED offices. Alex Odch was critically injured and died two hours later. Nine others in the building were also injured. Names of American Jews associated with the Jewish Defense League (JDL) were mentioned at the scene by law enforcement officials. This bombing was similar to previous bombings, earlier in the year, at the home of George Ashley, Director of the Institute of Historical Review in California, at the Santa Monica Office of the German-American PAC, at the home of suspected Nazi Tschirmer Soobzokov, the ADC Boston Office and the home of alleged Nazi police chief, Elmar Sprogis, in New York. All these bombings were thought to be connected with members of the Jewish Defense League.

His brutal murder created quite a stir in the U.S., both in

the media and legally. Initial investigations of the assassination indicated that members of the Jewish Defense League were responsible. However, the case was closed because, according to federal investigators, there was "lack of evidence." Under pressure from the ADC the case was reopened and Mr. William Webster of the FBI was ordered to testify before Congress on the inability to apprehend any suspects in the murder. Mr. Webster stated that three suspects were named in the investigation, but all three had fled the country. The U.S. government was taking action to have them extradited back for questioning.

The three suspects (previously mentioned at the scene), were Robert Manning, Keith Fuchs and Andy Green. Manning and his wife were arrested in Israel by Israeli police after the U.S. requested their extradition in connection with the 1980 bombing death of Patricia Wilkerson in California.

After the Odch murder, Manning fled to the West Bank Jewish settlement, Kriyat Arba. The U.S. government pressed for Manning's arrest, but stipulated that he must be apprehended in Israel "properly," since arrest in the occupied West Bank would imply U.S. recognition of Israeli sovereignty there.

A 1990 ABC "World News Tonight" segment about the

Mannings moved the U.S. government to apply additional pressure and Israel arrested and jailed them pending extradition to the U.S. However, under the U.S.-Israeli extradition treaty, the Mannings cannot be tried in the U.S. for the murder of Alex Odch unless they are extradited in connection with that murder. ADC hopes that information about the Odch murder might be developed in connection with the Wilkerson case and lead to a formal extradition request in connection with the murder. The Mannings appealed the extradition order of a lower court and remain in Israel, pending a decision by the Israeli High Court. Israeli minister of justice at the time, Dan Meridor, received death threats from right-wing supporters of the Mannings after signing the extradition order. The FBI maintains that the case is still a top priority. ADC will pursue the case until those guilty of Alex Odch's murder are brought to justice.

Alex Odch left behind his wife, Norma, and three daughters, Helena 7, Samia 5, and Suzanne 2. He was called "a bold man, a great voice, a rational voice, a man of God." Alex Odch was a peaceful, non-violent man who tried to do his best in peacefully debating the issues of the Middle East and his voice will not be stifled by violence. His murder was unnecessary and tragic. His fellow ADC members will always remember him and continue to carry on with his work. In recognition of all his accomplishments and contributions, the ADC has established the Alex Odch Memorial Organising Award.

On the 7th anniversary of Mr. Odch's assassination his murder is still being reviewed and investigated by the FBI and his murderers have not been brought to justice yet. Arabs worldwide, and American Arabs in particular, once again appeal to the U.S. government to bring his murderers to justice. Without this, we as Arabs cannot live anywhere in the world without the fear of being punished for our values and beliefs and for fighting for our causes and rights.

Man versus nature — in Israel score one for nature

By Jack Redden
Reuter

HULA VALLEY, Israel — In the age-old struggle between man and nature, score Israel's attempt to drain the Hula Valley as one for nature.

Four decades after Israel thought it was turning its ancient northern swamps and lake into farmland, it is taking the lead in a project to return a large part of it to its natural wet state.

"If someone asks me what is the reason to flood the area, my answer is that we are not flooding the area — it is being covered by water naturally," said Amos Harpe, regional director for the Jewish National Fund (JNF).

The JNF's scheme to drain the valley north of the Sea of Galilee, discussed for almost a century, began soon after Israel was established in 1948. When completed in 1958, it was hailed as another example of the new state's conquest over nature.

Boasts of victory were premature.

Soil under the lake, expected to be marginal, was discovered to be among the most fertile in Israel. Meanwhile, enthusiastic predictions for the soil under the former swamp further north — much larger than the lake — turned out to be completely wrong.

At the same time, the changes on what is the course of the Jordan River damaged the quality of water entering the Sea of Galilee, threatening the source of one third of Israel's fresh water.

About a quarter of the former swamps will become a recreation area. What is now soggy farmland will be a playground for windsurfers and boating.

The Jordan River route, straightened to speed its flow through the valley in the 1950s, will again be the meandering stream that watered the most northern papyrus swamp in the Middle East.

Residents, now unable to earn a living from the increasingly waterlogged land, will find new income running facilities such as restaurants. Hotels, however, will be banned to protect the environment, Mr. Harpe said. The JNF, which has spent more than \$300,000 on researching the change, hopes that work can begin in the next year. It would take about five years to complete.

"The reason is basically economic," but of course the environmentalists are very happy," Professor Dov Por, who has collaborated on a recent book on the Hula, said in an interview at Jerusalem's Hebrew University.

When the drainage project started in 1951, a few years after DDT had eradicated the malaria that once ravaged the former Arab residents, the shallow lake Hula covered 14 square km. while its swamps spread over 21 square km. — and three times that area during the winter rains.

Written records of it reach back 3,500 years — a vital source of fresh water and a route for every type of life from men to plants moving along the great

slash of the rift valley that reaches from Africa to Syria. Mr. Por and his fellow researchers have tried to determine what life the valley once held.

The new plan falls short of full restoration — the old lake bottom, for example, is too valuable to reflood — but it still generates enthusiasm.

It should pay immediate environmental dividends in the small nature reserve that was established in a corner of the former lake after the draining.

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Baghdad frees detained American

(Continued from page 1)

if they attempt to seize or transfer the ownership of funds," Oil Minister Usama Al Hiti told a press conference.

He was commenting on a Security Council resolution under which some Iraqi assets frozen abroad would be used by the United Nations to pay for post-Gulf war weapons inspections and aid to Iraqi dissidents.

"We also want these countries that future relations with those companies and bodies will be based on their conduct in this American piracy," Mr. Hiti said.

"We strongly advise governments, companies and other commercial bodies to strongly refuse the implementation of this illegitimate resolution."

Mr. Hiti called the decision "a cowboy-style robbery" that would make it difficult for Iraq to buy food, medicine and other needs.

"It is not directed against the Iraqi government but against the Iraqi people," he said. "The main objective of the United States is to fragment Iraq and the Iraqi people."

He said he doubted whether

the U.N. could apply its assets-seizure plan successfully because of "the thorny and problematic nature of the resolution."

Asked whether Iraq would export oil under terms offered by the U.N. to forestall the seizure of assets, Mr. Hiti said: "The Iraqi proposal is still being discussed in New York."

Iraq, blockaded under the U.N.'s Gulf war sanctions, has formally asked the Security Council to permit it export oil worth \$4 billion over a period of six months.

But there are no indications that oil talks between Iraq and U.N., stalled since March, are about to resume.

Mr. Hiti said Oil Ministry efforts were now concentrated on developing production and refineries and preparing to export "whenever we are allowed to."

He said Iraq now produced 550,000 barrels per day (bpd) for domestic consumption and had the capacity to produce "above 2.5 million bpd."

Mr. Hiti said his country had no intention of disrupting oil markets if the embargo were lifted. "We are members of OPEC (Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries) and respect its

decisions." He said all OPEC members have agreed to "take quick measures to reduce their quotas in parallel to the increase in Iraqi production."

"To export huge quantities needs some time, but our oil installations are completely ready," Mr. Hiti said.

He said small quantities of Iraqi crude were at present exported to Jordan under "a non-commercial deal."

Palestinian shot dead, 52 wounded

(Continued from page 1)

conditions and closure of solitary confinement blocks in two prisons.

Israel's minister of police met with some Palestinian prisoners on hunger-strike Friday and invited the media to examine conditions there.

Moshe Shahal spoke to reporters after visiting two prisons in the West Bank. He said many of the inmates' complaints were unjustified, but he agreed to give serious consideration to their demands for better food and medical care.

Mr. Shahal said the prisoners

be met with indicated they were ready to end the strike, but feared the reaction of hardline organisers.

"The motive in the end is political," Mr. Shahal said on Israel Television.

The police minister said he advised Arab lawyers from the occupied territories to coordinate family visits to the prisons with the prison authority next week to examine prison conditions.

"We will let the media too," Mr. Shahal said, "see for itself what the conditions are like, how the prisoners are being held and if this strike is justified."

Dutch cut El Al crash toll estimate

(Continued from page 1)

housing complex, making a precise count of the shifting population difficult.

The Dutch Transport Ministry said the tape from the aircraft's flight data recorder had been sent to Washington for decoding after staff of the air accidents investigation branch in Farnborough, England, were unable to read it.

The flight data recorder, or "black box," records instrument readings of a plane's flight and should therefore allow crash in-

vestigators to recreate step by step what happened to the four-engine aircraft.

The Israeli plane is believed to have lost both starboard motors before crashing.

Roughly half of the wreck of the aircraft has been separated from the rubble of the apartment buildings and taken to a hangar at Amsterdam's Schiphol airport for examination.

Firemen began an intensive search of the area around the crash site Saturday for more pieces of the plane.

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Hashmi's Restaurant
FIRST CLASS INDIAN RESTAURANT
Special Executive Lunches
Take away service available
Open Daily 12:30-3:30 pm
7:30-11:30 pm
After the Philadelphia Hotel
Towards 3rd circle
Tel: 659519 659520

AGABA CHINESE FOOD
Open daily:
12:00 - 15:00 & 18:30 - 23:30
Tel: 03 - 314415

RESTAURANT CHINA
The first & best Chinese Restaurant in Jordan
1st Circle, Jabal Amman, near Ahilyah Girls School
Take-away service
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6:30-Midnight
Tel. 639968

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AUTHENTIC CHINESE CUISINE
elegant colorful atmosphere moderate prices
sherman... tel: 660230
(now open daily)

CHEN'S CHINESE RESTAURANT
Mecca Street, Yarmouk Engineers' Housing Estate, near Kilo Supermarket
Mongolian Barbeque for Lunch Friday only
Tel: 818214
Come and taste our specialties
Open daily 12:00 - 3:30 p.m.
6:30 - Midnight

TAIWAN TOURISMO
Chinese Restaurant
New management by Mr. Chen. D. H.
Take away service & home delivery
Open daily
12:00 - 15:30 18:30 - Midnight
Near Third Circle, opposite Akilah Hospital
Jabal Amman, tel. 641093

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British firm to help struggling Kenya Airways

NAIROBI (R) — State-run Kenya Airways has hired a subsidiary of British Airways PLC to reduce inefficiency and cut losses at the national carrier, its top executive has said. Philip Ndegwa, executive chairman of the debt-ridden firm, said in a statement to Reuters that Speeding Consulting was asked to help provide "staff development programmes and oversee job cuts to increase dedication and commitment." The three-year contract is seen as the first step on the road towards privatising the East African country's loss-making airline.

Mr. Ndegwa said the programmes were aimed at making the firm efficient before it could be sold to private investors. He said he had held discussions with some European airlines about the sale but added, "no firm deals have been negotiated with any one of them."

Belgium, France top productivity list in Japan report

TOKYO (R) — France and Belgium topped a list measuring productivity among 12 major industrialised countries in 1990, according to a report by a Tokyo private research institute.

The report by the Productivity Research Institute of the Japan Productivity Centre put France and Belgium at the top of the list with 128 points each, followed by Italy (125), the former West Germany (112), Spain (106), Japan (100), Australia (98), Britain (95), Sweden (88) and South Korea (55).

It was noted as saying Japan's economic productivity level was low because of a number of poorly performing industries.

Newspapers likely to earn a record JD6.6m from advertisements this year

Following is the first of a three-part article on the unprecedented volume of advertisements in the Jordanian daily newspapers since the beginning of this year. Issues raised in this part centre on ad prices and the responsibilities of the newspapers as seen by a media manager.

By Samir Shafiq
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The total volume of advertisements in Jordan's four daily newspapers was worth about JD4.2 million in 1991, but the volume for this year is expected to be a record JD6.6 million.

According to many market sources, the Jordan Press Foundation (Al Ra'i and the Jordan Times) is likely to earn JD3.7 million in 1992, a 48 per cent increase over its JD2.5 million income from advertisements in 1991.

What proves the public preference to advertise in Al Ra'i was Saturday's (Sept. 26) issue when the Arabic daily printed a record 60 pages, almost 48.5 pages of which were ads.

The Arabic dailies Al Dustour and Sawt Al Shaab printed 56 pages and 20 pages, respectively, on the same day but the ads

covered only 37.5 pages of Al Dustour and 4.5 pages of Sawt Al Shaab. The Jordan Times remains unique, regardless of the volume of ads, as it is Jordan's only English language daily.

A general observation on why ads have greatly expanded in recent months was given by a newspaper staff member as being due to the low cost of advertising and the good financial standing of some advertisers, especially those who recently returned from the Arab Gulf countries.

Preferring anonymity, he said an average normal ad in the past measured about 10 cm on two columns (10x2) but the Gulf returnees, opening new businesses in Amman, have blown up the size of an ad to almost a quarter of a page to publicise their products and services.

The newspaper employee added that a study was under consideration as to whether ad prices were low and should be raised or whether the prices were within acceptable levels to the majority of citizens in the Kingdom.

The media manager of JII, a reputable advertising agency, said it was unfair when newspapers charge different ads according to one single rate. He pointed out that local industrialists and small-scale entrepreneurs are at total disadvantage when their ads are charged the same rate as those which promote and publicise foreign products.

"It's against the country's drive to encourage consumers to buy local products," he stressed.

The JII chief, Mr. Rabah, classified the ads into two categories, each of which captures 50 per cent of the overall volume of newspaper ads.

1) The ads of quality, where art, skill and design are manifested to attract the attention of the educated and smart reader to a special product or service.

2) The normal, small ads, which need no writing talent and carry no special sketches, such as those announcing rent, car or house sales, invitations, obituaries, congratulations and government or court notices.

Mr. Rabah said that recently, people have become more aware of quality ads and the market is slowly shifting towards that of artistic designs, skillful writings and drawings and modern styles of alluring the public.

Yet, Mr. Rabah pointed out, the newspapers are not encouraging the new sophistication in advertising techniques as they continue to "kill" a well-designed and sizeable ad by either placing it amidst a large volume of normal small ads or by squeezing it on any page as long as it fits a required empty space.

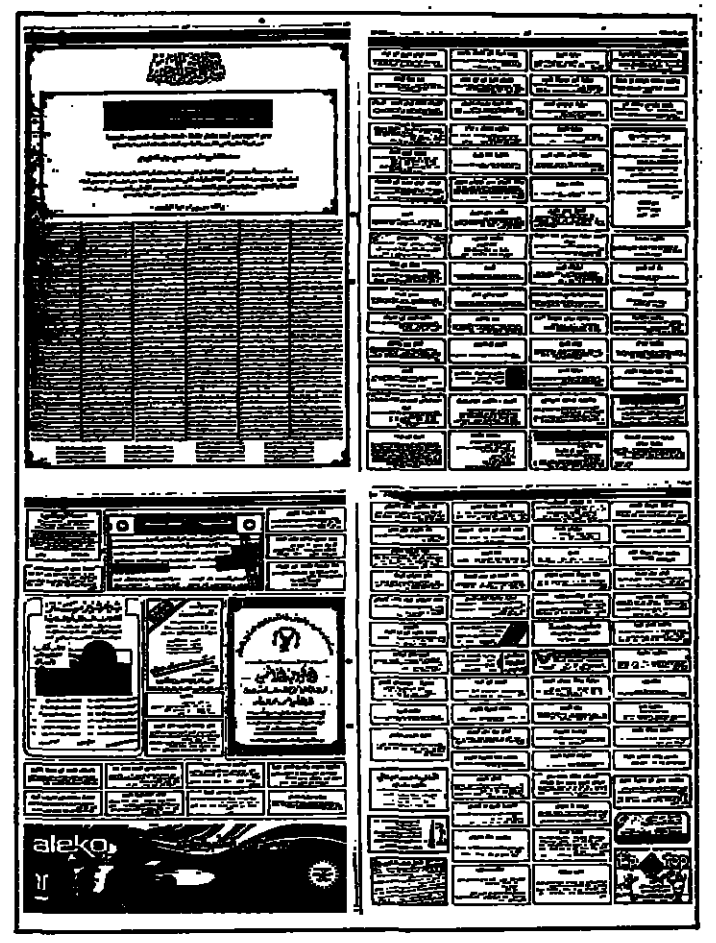
"They (the newspapers) should amend the charges according to the quality and the size of the advertisement," Mr. Rabah said.

He elaborated that if an advertising agency reads a large and sensational ad, a newspaper needs only to paste or frame the ad on the page at no cost whatsoever, contrary to small normal ads which require lengthy and costly production steps.

As such, Mr. Rabah reasoned that newspapers should charge more on the normal, small ads and, at the same time, pass this financial benefit through lower costs to the agencies which produce "quality ads" to encourage and expand their scope of operation.

Noting that only about 10 advertising agencies out of about 200 operate in a modern, highly technical way, caring to promote their customers' products, the JII media manager explained that the best strategy to push a product as a service in the market was to utilise all media outlets in such a way that a consumer finds himself "besieged" in his office, home and even on the road or while shopping.

As such, Mr. Rabah sees a combination of promotional companies in newspapers, magazines,



Four full pages of ads in the Arabic daily Al Ra'i illustrate the flood of ads which keep the newspaper staff bustling past midnight every day.

radio, television billboards and "give-away" items and pamphlets as an important element to successful marketing a product or a service that, of course, should carry a good margin of quality in the first place.

He specified December of every year as usually being the peak month in newspaper advertising and said that January had proved to be the last month of the year in terms of ad activities. He attributed the lethargy in January to the cold weather and administrative and financial considerations which normally affect all businesses in the market.

Mr. Rabah finally warned in-

vestors not to expect a fortune or a quick profit from an advertising business because competition was extremely fierce and the profit margin was getting so thin that a "financial bonanza" from this type of business simply does not exist any more.

He noted that certain national, religious or Royal occasions may bring a period of advertising euphoria in the market but that is only a short-lived business opportunity upon which some individuals or small advertising offices usually capitalise. However, he pointed out, such occasions do not provide steady, consistent and sizeable income.

Foreign exchange dealings in U.S. average \$192 billion a day since '89

NEW YORK (AP) — Foreign exchange dealings by banks and currency dealers increased by 49 per cent over the past three years in the United States, with an average \$192 billion changing hands each day, the government has said.

The Federal Reserve Bank (Fed) of New York, which monitors foreign-exchange activity in this country, made the disclosures as part of a worldwide survey into one of the fastest growing areas of international finance. The survey is conducted every three years.

Foreign exchange trading is an important tool for companies that buy and sell products abroad. Banks and brokers have made a booming business by offering ways to limit a company's risk of loss when foreign currency markets are struck by speculation, as has been the case in Europe in recent weeks.

Banking industry officials estimate foreign currency trading worldwide has escalated 50 per cent since 1989. That would mean nearly \$1 trillion in foreign currency changes hands each day, about a fifth of that in the U.S. market.

Precise figures on global foreign-exchange dealings in the past three years won't be available until early 1993 when the Bank for International Settlements of Basel, Switzerland, finishes a global survey of the industry, the New York Fed said.

Although foreign-exchange dealings are still growing fast, the pace has slowed considerably from the booming years of the late 1980s. Between 1986 and 1989, foreign exchange trading in the United States grew by 120 per cent, but growth during the past three years was 49 per cent, said Margaret Greene, senior vice president at the New York Feder-

al Reserve Bank.

The New York Fed said banks handled about 83 per cent of all foreign currency deals, while non-banking firms handled about 17 per cent.

Ms. Greene said market concentration didn't change much in the last three years, with the top 10 firms accounting for 41 per cent of total trading volume in 1992, vs. 42 per cent in 1989. The Fed didn't release the firms' names.

The standard spot foreign-exchange contract, which takes place within two days or less, accounted for half of all deals. More exotic trades, such as foreign exchange swap contracts, accounted for 30 per cent of all volume. These swaps basically are an exchange of two currencies to hedge against swings in a currency's value.

The remaining volume was consumed by all forms of option contracts, 10 per cent, and the remainder by various currency derivatives.

The Fed said the dollar was the most active traded currency, changing hands in 89 per cent of all transactions. The next four most widely traded currencies

were the German mark, 30 per cent; Japanese yen, 25 per cent; British pound, 11 per cent and Swiss franc, nine per cent.

Other central banks provided limited details about their currency dealings. The Bank of England said England's foreign exchange volume rose 62 per cent over the last three years to \$303 billion; Switzerland's central bank said turnover averaged \$68 billion; Germany's Bundesbank reported turnover of about \$60 billion and France reported \$35 billion.

Al Hayat Group
Traditional Arts & Handicrafts
Gardens Str. - Elian Bldg. - 3rd floor
Opposite Arab College - Amman
Tel. 687956/7 Fax 687957

Financial Markets

Jordan Times
in co-operation with
Cairo Amman Bank

U.S. Dollar in International Markets

Currency	New York Close Date: 8.10.1992	New York Close Date: 9.10.1992
Sterling Pound	1.6940	1.6920
Deutsche Mark	1.4825	1.4880
Swiss Franc	1.3139	1.3160
French Franc	5.0340	5.0460
Japanese Yen	121.60	121.85
European Currency Unit	1.3365	1.3355

USD Per STG

European Opening at 8:00 a.m. GMT.

Date: 10.10.1992

Barter/Exchange Interest Rates

Currency	1 MTH	3 MTHS	6 MTHS	12 MTHS
U.S. Dollar	3.05	3.25	3.25	3.43
Sterling Pound	8.94	8.81	8.84	8.19
Deutsche Mark	9.00	8.75	8.43	8.00
Swiss Franc	6.00	6.31	6.31	6.12
French Franc	11.50	11.12	10.25	9.62
Japanese Yen	4.05	3.87	3.75	3.62
European Currency Unit	11.50	11.25	10.50	10.00

Interbank bid rates for amounts exceeding 1 U.S. Dollar 1,000,000 or equivalent.

Precious Metals

Metal	USD/Oz	JD/Gm	Metal	USD/Oz	JD/Gm
Gold	340.75	6.74	Silver	3.79	.080

21 Karat

Central Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin

Currency	Bid	Offer
U.S. Dollar	0.6800	0.6820
Sterling Pound	1.1493	1.1550
Deutsche Mark	0.4565	0.4588
Swiss Franc	0.7157	0.7183
French Franc	0.1347	0.1354
Japanese Yen	0.5572	0.5600
Dutch Guilder	0.4061	0.4081
Swedish Krona	0.1216	0.1222
Italian Lira	0.0521	0.0524
Belgian Franc	0.02218	0.02229

Per 100

Other Currencies

Currency	Bid	Offer
Bahraini Dinar	1.7740	1.7840
Lebanese Lira	0.0270	0.0300
Saudi Riyal	0.1811	0.1820
Kuwaiti Dinar	2.2350	2.3000
Qatari Riyal	0.1842	0.1820
Omani Riyal	1.7340	1.7600
UAE Dirham	0.1842	0.1852
Greek Drachma	0.3775	0.3590
Cypriot Pound	1.5235	1.5500

Per 100

CAS Indices for Amman Financial Market

Index	10.9.1992 Close	7.10.1992 Close
All-Share	152.95	151.76
Banking Sector	117.71	115.04
Insurance Sector	161.30	165.86
Industry Sector	197.75	197.78
Services Sector	220.28	223.29

December 31, 1990 = 100

COMPANY'S NAME	TRADING VOLUME	TRADING PRICE	OPENING PRICE	CLOSING PRICE
JORDAN ISLAMIC BANK	5,118	3,610	3,600	3,590
JORDAN KURAIT BANK	14,424	2,130	2,110	2,110
JORDAN INVESTMENT BANK	6,628	3,400	3,400	3,400
JORDAN DEVELOPMENT BANK	910	1,000	1,000	1,000
JORDAN BANK FOR SAVING & INVESTMENT	553	2,200	2,210	2,210
JORDAN BANKING CORPORATION/JORDAN	15,579	2,920	2,900	2,920
JORDAN NATIONAL BANK	26,103	2,800	2,790	2,870
JORDAN INVESTMENT & FINANCE BANK	99,315	4,150	4,150	4,140
JORDAN BANK FOR INVESTMENT/OLD	69,947	4,740	4,650	4,650
JORDAN BANK FOR INVESTMENT/OLD	301,662	1,320	1,340	1,340
JORDAN BANK FOR INVESTMENT/OLD	176,256	1,870	1,900	1,930
JORDAN BANK FOR INVESTMENT/OLD	101,187	3,510	3,650	3,670
JORDAN BANK FOR INVESTMENT/OLD	133,881	3,130	3,150	3,170
JORDAN BANK FOR INVESTMENT/OLD	34,409	4,070	4,110	4,020
JORDAN BANK FOR INVESTMENT/OLD	587	16,800	16,800	16,800
JORDAN BANK FOR INVESTMENT/OLD	153,854	118,500	118,500	118,500
JORDAN BANK FOR INVESTMENT/OLD	568	3,520	3,550	3,550
JORDAN BANK FOR INVESTMENT/OLD	286	3,120	3,140	3,140
JORDAN BANK FOR INVESTMENT/OLD	1,576	3,180	3,150	3,150
JORDAN BANK FOR INVESTMENT/OLD	24,785	2,880	2,900	2,880
JORDAN BANK FOR INVESTMENT/OLD	8,600	2,020	2,000	2,000
JORDAN BANK FOR INVESTMENT/OLD	383	2,340	2,450	2,450
JORDAN BANK FOR INVESTMENT/OLD	2,662	2,320	2,300	2,300
JORDAN BANK FOR INVESTMENT/OLD	1,582	4,140	4,000	3,960
JORDAN BANK FOR INVESTMENT/OLD	47,559	1,120	1,120	1,120
JORDAN BANK FOR INVESTMENT/OLD	41,761	1,200	1,200	1,200
JORDAN BANK FOR INVESTMENT/OLD	2,888	2,350	2,350	2,350
JORDAN BANK FOR INVESTMENT/OLD	215,833	2,200	2,140	2,090
JORDAN BANK FOR INVESTMENT/OLD	1,200	0,240	0,240	0,240
JORDAN BANK FOR INVESTMENT/OLD	7,571	1,130	1,130	1,130
JORDAN BANK FOR INVESTMENT/OLD	50,270	1,350	1,320	1,270
JORDAN BANK FOR INVESTMENT/OLD	42,592	0,740	0,740	0,770
JORDAN BANK FOR INVESTMENT/OLD	24	1,650	0,480	0,500
JORDAN BANK FOR INVESTMENT/OLD	3,44	2,320	4,970	5,000
JORDAN BANK FOR INVESTMENT/OLD	19,819	1,190	1,190	1,190
JORDAN BANK FOR INVESTMENT/OLD	5,115	2,460	4,470	4,460
JORDAN BANK FOR INVESTMENT/OLD	12,950	2,320	2,530	2,510
JORDAN BANK FOR INVESTMENT/OLD	22,112	7,900	7,900	7,900
JORDAN BANK FOR INVESTMENT/OLD	24,441	6,830	6,810	6,890
JORDAN BANK FOR INVESTMENT/OLD	11,448	5,780	5,760	5,790
JORDAN BANK FOR INVESTMENT/OLD	1,050	21,000	21,000	21,000
JORDAN BANK FOR INVESTMENT/OLD	23,288	5,880	5,880	5,900
JORDAN BANK FOR INVESTMENT/OLD	88,575	8,600	8,600	8,600
JORDAN BANK FOR INVESTMENT/OLD	13,165	3,570	3,570	3,550
JORDAN BANK FOR INVESTMENT/OLD	36,195	11,390	12,400	11,100
JORDAN BANK FOR INVESTMENT/OLD	9,225	0,740	0,680	0,730
JORDAN BANK FOR INVESTMENT/OLD	302	3,800	3,820	3,820
JORDAN BANK FOR INVESTMENT/OLD	1,450	2,810	2,830	2,850
JORDAN BANK FOR INVESTMENT/OLD	600	5,000	5,000	5,000
JORDAN BANK FOR INVESTMENT/OLD	112,442	2,230	2,230	2,240
JORDAN BANK FOR INVESTMENT/OLD	7,779	0,820	0,820	0,830
JORDAN BANK FOR INVESTMENT/OLD	7,200	4,750	4,800	4,800
JORDAN BANK FOR INVESTMENT/OLD	13,496	13,500	13,480	13,500
JORDAN BANK FOR INVESTMENT/OLD	2,673	3,540	3,570	3,550
JORDAN BANK FOR INVESTMENT/OLD	175	3,400	3,400	3,400
JORDAN BANK FOR INVESTMENT/OLD	16,317	2,300	2,300	2,270
JORDAN BANK FOR INVESTMENT/OLD	8,304	2,980	2,980	2,980
JORDAN BANK FOR INVESTMENT/OLD	2,600	3,600	3,600	3,600
JORDAN BANK FOR INVESTMENT/OLD	27,588	6,120	6,150	6,100
JORDAN BANK FOR INVESTMENT/OLD	12,783	3,930	3,930	3,930
JORDAN BANK FOR INVESTMENT/OLD	44,737	1,300	1,300	1,320
JORDAN BANK FOR INVESTMENT/OLD	1,870	1,830	1,870	1,870
JORDAN BANK FOR INVESTMENT/OLD	17,134	0,420	0,420	0,440
JORDAN BANK FOR INVESTMENT/OLD	131,118	4,800	4,830	4,840
JORDAN BANK FOR INVESTMENT/OLD	130,758	2,610	2,610	2,620
JORDAN BANK FOR INVESTMENT/OLD	9,271	3,360	3,370	3,390

NO. OF TRADED SHARES IN PARALLEL MARKET: 15690

TRADING VOLUME IN THE PARALLEL MARKET: 1 JD 31740

Cinema Tel: 677420
CONCORD
SHARIHAN...IN LOVE & FEAR
(Arabic)
Shows: 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30

Cinema Tel: 634144
PHILADELPHIA
Richard Gere/Julia Roberts ... in
PRETTY WOMAN
Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30
The Goonies

Tel: 675571
Nabil Al Mashini Theatre
Today and every day, Nabil Al Mashini Theatre in Abdali presents
Abu Awwad... In TAA'AH WA KAYMEH (CHAOS)
Show: 8:30 p.m.
Ticket window is open all day

Tel: 625155
AHLAN THEATRE
Nabil & Hisham presents
The Political Satire Play
Welcome... New World Order
Show starts at 8:30 p.m.

CAR FOR SALE
Duty unpaid - Mitsubishi Galant - super salon - 1987 - gray metallic - stc shift manual - full option - mileage 83,000 km - embassies car regularly maintained - in very good condition. - Best offer.
Tel. 637153/4 between 8:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

MITSUBISHI PAJERO For Sale
1988 good condition
JD 6,000 duty unpaid
Tel. 659484, Amman

FOR SALE
1988 duty free Nissan Sunny, 1300 cc, with air-condition, 60,000 km only. Blue plate, white colour.
Please call Mr. Saleh, UNDP Office, Amman, tel. 668171 or 797242 after office hours.
Also for rent in Shmeisani 3 bedroom apartment.

FOR SALE
Mercedes 230 E, 1989, black colour, full options.
Mercedes 230 E, 89, maroon colour, customs not paid, full options.
Volvo 740 GL, 92, bordeaux colour, full options.
For interested people, call 696124-6

JORDAN TIMES
TEL: 667171

Fully Furnished Flat To Let
Near 7th Circle, 2 bedrooms, dining room, guest room, 2 bathrooms, kitchen, 2 balconies, centrally heated, telephone, car park.
Please call after 12 noon, tel. 629587

Furnished Apartment For Rent
Consists of two bedrooms, lounge, salon, with central heating and telephone. Located in Shmeisani, opposite Abu Anza Housing Estate. Annual rent: JD 5,000.
Please call Al Silawi Office - Jabal Al Hussein, Firas Circle - tel. 663816

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Ignoring U.N. fly ban, Serb warplanes attack Gradacac

BIJELJINA, Bosnia (R) — Serb warplanes resumed attacks on the northern town of Gradacac Saturday, violating a United Nations ban on military flights over the republic, Bosnian and Croatian radio reported.

"After heavy shelling throughout the night, the aggressors' MIG-21 aircraft attacked Gradacac again at 9:02 this morning. The whole town is burning again," Bosnian radio said.

The 15-nation U.N. Security Council established the no-fly zone in a 140-vote Friday, with China abstaining.

A Croatian radio correspondent said the Gradacac area and the town centre were rocketed and bombed from the air several times Saturday. There was no immediate word on casualties, but he said 14 people died in similar attacks Friday.

Bosnian radio said enemy aircraft also flew Saturday over Brcko, another northern town where the Bosnian army is holding out against Serb attack.

A Bosnian radio source, speaking to Reuters in Sarajevo, said the radio had learned a MIG-21 had been shot down over Gradacac. But it did not immediately broadcast this claim.

A Reuters correspondent who drove from Belgrade to Bijeljina, 35 kilometres southeast of Brcko, said the only aircraft he saw were two unmarked, green-painted military helicopters, apparently on a reconnaissance mission, which approached the frontier from Serbia before turning back.

He said heavy gunfire could be heard from the direction of Brcko where, according to Serb police, artillery and infantry were in action to repel Croat units which

they said crossed the Sava River on the Croatian frontier Friday.

Kalashnikov-toting Serb police were turning back long lines of vehicles less than halfway from Bijeljina to Brcko and could not say when the road would reopen.

Brcko lies in a strategic corridor of land stretching across northern Bosnia which Serb rebels hoped to control entirely after they captured Bosanski Brod, a key centre just across the Sava River from Croatia, Tuesday night.

Serb police said their opponents were trying to punch a hole through this corridor to reach Gradacac and create an escape route for its beleaguered Muslim defenders.

There was no immediate reaction from the Serb side to the allegations Serb planes were pounding Gradacac. The Serb News Agency said it had no information but was checking.

The U.N. resolution on the ban did not provide for fighter planes to enforce it, but said compliance would be monitored by U.N. observer teams stationed where needed at airfields throughout the former Yugoslavia.

Governments are being asked to assist through "technical monitoring and other capabilities" — a reference to radar and aircraft capable of scanning the region. Bosnian Muslims fear Gradacac is the Serbs' next main target after the fall of Bosanski Brod.

Although the Security Council resolution did not provide for enforcement of the ban, the resolution said it would "consider" the further measures necessary "to enforce it if the ban were ignored."

British U.N. ambassador Sir

David Hannay said before the Council vote: "Anybody who thinks that they can flout this ban without being found out is going to be badly surprised. And anybody who thinks that, having been found out, no action will be taken, will also be badly surprised."

Overnight, the old town and city centre of Sarajevo were shelled sporadically and hit by occasional anti-aircraft cannon and machine gun fire. There was worse violence in some outlying suburbs of the Bosnian capital.

The Muslim and Croat-held Western district of Dobrinja flanking the airport was shelled throughout the night. The Western suburb of Stup, about 10 kilometres from the city centre, was the scene of heavy mortar exchanges.

In Belgrade, Yugoslav Prime Minister Milan Panic appealed Friday for people to vote in favour of early elections in Serbia in a weekend referendum which Serb leaders hope will result in delaying a poll.

"In this way I want to turn to the voters in Serbia and call them to take part in the referendum Sunday," Mr. Panic said in a statement published by Tanjug News Agency.

"All important political factors have agreed that elections must be held soon. That is why I appeal to you that with your vote in the referendum you enable this."

Fifteen months of war with other former Yugoslav republics, U.N. sanctions and international condemnation have weakened the popularity of Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic.

But Mr. Milosevic and his rul-

ing Socialist Party have previously succeeded in achieving their goals through quickly organised referendums.

Sunday's referendum appears to follow this pattern as it asks the electorate to vote for or against an amendment of the constitution, while not explaining that this could allow elections in Serbia to be brought forward from 1994.

A negative vote would put the issue on hold for six months although Yugoslav President Dobrica Cosic could still call federal elections.

Meanwhile, the Yugoslav army has begun withdrawing from a strategic peninsula in line with an agreement reached between the presidents of Croatia and the rump Yugoslavia, a diplomatic source said Friday.

The source, who asked not be identified, said the pull-out from the Prevlaka peninsula, had begun Thursday and already appeared to be well under way.

"All the sounds I've had point the same way, namely that things have started moving," the source told Reuters.

Prevlaka, a sliver of rocky land, just into the Adriatic Sea southeast of the Croatian port of Dubrovnik on the border between Croatia and Montenegro.

It overlooks the entrance to the only naval base left to the Yugoslav fleet, in the Boka Kotorska Bay in Montenegro.

President Franjo Tudjman of Croatia and Dobrica Cosic of Yugoslavia agreed at talks in Geneva on Sept. 30 that the Yugoslav army withdrawal from Prevlaka and areas south of Dubrovnik should be completed by Oct. 20.

ANC: De Klerk apartheid apology is not enough

JOHANNESBURG (R) — The ANC Saturday cautiously welcomed President F.W. De Klerk's apology for the injustices of white minority rule but pro-apartheid Conservatives said he had committed political suicide.

"We welcome the statement by Mr. De Klerk. We do not think he has gone far enough," said African National Congress (ANC) spokesman Carl Niehaus.

Mr. Niehaus said Mr. De Klerk had merely apologised that Africans had clung too long to policies they knew could not succeed, and did not say he was sorry for the principles that apartheid rule was based on and stood for.

"De Klerk has missed the point. He needs to apologise for the sufferings caused by all that apartheid stood for. Apartheid was wrong, apartheid was inhuman. Mr. De Klerk knows that. All he needs is to accept it and apologise in full," Mr. Niehaus said.

The pro-apartheid Conservative Party (CP) said the reformist leader had turned his back on all his Afrikaner nation once stood for.

"I do not know what has happened to him. The man has committed political suicide. I cannot explain it. I don't understand him. He is actually denying the identity and existence of the Afrikaner nation and all that it stood for," CP leader Andries Treurnicht told Reuters.

For the first time since he came to power in 1989 and began dismantling apartheid, Mr. De Klerk said Friday he was sorry Afrikaners had clung too long to the system even though it was clear it would not work.

"For too long we clung to a dream of separated nation states, when it was already clear that it would not succeed sufficiently. For that we are sorry. That is why we are working for a new dispensation," the reformist president said.

Several senior government members have apologised publicly for injustices of apartheid, but Mr. De Klerk had hitherto refused, saying the country should look to the future rather than dwell on the past.

Prominent Afrikaner anti-apartheid church leader Bepko Naudé, a priest in Mr. De Klerk's Dutch Reformed Church, said though Mr. De Klerk's apology was limited he was glad that at last it had been made.

"We are overjoyed. I am sure next time we will say more," said Rev. Naudé, an Afrikaner who rejected apartheid many years ago.

Mr. De Klerk, the ANC and 17 other parties are involved in democracy talks to end more than 300 years of white domination.

But the talks have stalled because of disagreements over township violence, majority rule and other issues.

Meanwhile, the ANC Friday denounced newspaper reports saying a faction within the movement was trying to push aside Nelson Mandela in favour of younger leaders.

Two newspapers, the Weekly Mail and New Nation, Friday said an alleged ANC internal document called for the 74-year-old Mandela to be "sidelined."

IRA claims latest bomb explosions in London

LONDON (R) — The Irish Republican Army (IRA) said Saturday it planted a bomb which exploded in a London telephone kiosk near a high-security police station, injuring one person.

The IRA, fighting to end British rule in Northern Ireland, also claimed responsibility for two explosions in London Friday night, according to British news reports.

A spokesman at Scotland Yard police headquarters could not immediately confirm the reports.

Saturday's bomb exploded just after 9 a.m. (0800 GMT) in a telephone booth outside a large hotel and opposite Paddington

Green high-security police station used to interrogate terrorist suspects.

A nearby railway terminus was closed and searched for a possible second bomb but it was later reopened.

Damage was minimal but traffic was disrupted when police cordoned off streets around the blast scene and the closure of Paddington Station caused travel chaos for rail passengers.

About 200 people in the Metropolitan Hotel were evacuated from their rooms, gathering in the lobby to await the all-clear.

Major warns against yielding influence to France, Germany

BRIGHTON, England (AP) — Prime Minister John Major, facing down nationalist sentiment in his Conservative Party, said that Britain must ratify a European union treaty or abandon influence to France and Germany.

On Thursday, they gave a muted reception to an economic stance that ruled out significant cuts in interest rates in favour of a German-style emphasis on holding down inflation despite continuing recession and the election of the pound from the European currency system last month.

Delegates cheered, waved Union Jacks and blue party flags in a seven-minute standing ovation as Mr. Major and his wife, Norma, left the convention centre to the strains of "Land of Hope and Glory," a popular Tory anthem.

But in the view of analysts, Mr. Major faced a close battle in pushing a bill to ratify the Maastricht Treaty through parliament, and still lacks a coherent economic strategy to replace a policy that was based on membership of Europe's Exchange Rate Mechanism (ERM).

Overturning the Conservative tradition of well-disciplined annual assemblies, delegates have applauded critics — led by

his predecessor Margaret Thatcher — of his determination to get parliament to ratify the Maastricht Treaty on European union.

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Soares joins criticism of Gorbachev restrictions

LISBON (R) — Portuguese President Mario Soares has joined growing criticism of Russian government restrictions placed on former Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev.

"All the countries of the world owe a debt of gratitude to Gorbachev," Mr. Soares said in a speech in the northern city of Oporto Friday night. "It is intolerable that he should be treated in such a manner."

The Russian authorities have prevented Mr. Gorbachev from leaving the country and have seized offices in Moscow used by a political think-tank he set up after resigning as Soviet president in December last year.

The sanctions were imposed after Mr. Gorbachev refused to testify to a constitutional court investigation into the role of the Soviet Communist Party.

Mr. Gorbachev, who led the Soviet Union into political and economic reforms that ended the cold war and led to the break up of Moscow's former empire, said the court had no legal right to compel him to appear before it.

France and Italy have also expressed concern at the measures taken against Gorbachev, in particular the ban on his travelling abroad.

Two of Italy's governing parties and the country's main opposition group Friday jointly asked Russia to lift a travel ban on Mr. Gorbachev, who is due to visit Italy next week.

"We ask the Russian authorities to revoke restrictive measures which, if prolonged, risk becoming counter-productive and

damaging to the difficult task of consolidating democracy in Russia," the three said in a statement.

The appeal was signed by the Socialist, the junior partners in the government, the Social Democrats, and the former Communist Party, now renamed the Democratic Party of the Left (PDS).

Meanwhile, a senior aide to Russian leader Boris Yeltsin accused Mr. Gorbachev Friday of seeking a political comeback in the style of Lenin's 1917 Bolshevik Revolution.

The latest shot in slanging war between the two Russian statesmen came from Mikhail Poltoranin, information minister and deputy prime minister, and himself a target of recent public criticism from Mr. Gorbachev.

He told reporters attending a Commonwealth of Independent States summit in Bishkek, capital of Kyrgyzstan, that a think-tank set up by Gorbachev engaged in profiteering instead of its stated goals of social and economic studies.

"Gorbachev has set up a second Zurich, a Bolshevik centre from which he watches to see how he can start firing the Aurora guns at the present authorities to launch another coup," Mr. Poltoranin said.

Bolshevik leader Vladimir Lenin lived in the Swiss city of Zurich until his return to Russia in March 1917. The Communist takeover the following October was launched by a shot from the ship Aurora in the then-capital of St. Petersburg.

Shevardnadze alleges mass killings of Georgians

UNITED NATIONS (Agencies) — Georgian leader Eduard Shevardnadze charged in a letter circulated that Abkhazian separatists were carrying out mass executions of civilians and he asked the Security Council to consider setting up a war crimes commission.

"According to reliable sources reaching us from the occupied territory, mass executions of the Georgian civilian population, widespread torture, rape and other atrocities are being committed," Mr. Shevardnadze told the council president.

"It is hard to believe that such barbaric acts can be happening in the twentieth century," he added, saying the Abkhazians were being helped by "mercenaries from the north."

"On behalf of the government of Georgia, I would like to appeal to the members of the Security Council ... to consider setting up a war crimes commission to collect evidence of possible atrocities committed in Georgia."

Georgia was ready to furnish photographs, videos, eyewitness depositions and other appropriate material, he added.

Abkhazian separatists recently swept Georgian forces from a large swathe of territory bordering Russia, with the help of ethnic cousins on the Russian side of the frontier.

On Thursday, in response to another appeal from Georgia, where elections are scheduled Sunday, the Security Council called for an immediate halt to the fighting in the former Soviet republic and endorsed the dispatch of a U.N. mission to try to win compliance with a Sept. 3 ceasefire signed in Moscow.

Mr. Shevardnadze demanded Friday that separatists in the breakaway Abkhazian region give back territory they won in military victories over the past week.

Mr. Shevardnadze, who goes before Georgian voters Sunday, demanded "an unconditional withdrawal of Abkhazian and North Caucasian forces to the positions they occupied before Oct. 1."

The fighting, coupled with fears that it could broaden into a war between Georgia and Russia, has prompted the United Nations to send two diplomats to the region next Monday, a U.N. spokesman in Geneva said.

Mr. Shevardnadze, seeking to ease tensions, agreed to meet with Russian President Boris Yeltsin and Abkhazian leaders next Tuesday.

He has said repeatedly that the rift with Russia has not been caused by Mr. Yeltsin but by hardliners in the Russian legislature.

"We are ready to fully cooperate with our neighbour," the ITAR-TASS News Agency quoted Mr. Shevardnadze as saying.

WORLD NEWS IN BRIEF

U.N. soldiers wounded in Sarajevo

SARAJEVO (R) — A United Nations armoured vehicle ran over a mine west of Sarajevo Saturday and an unconfirmed report said three Ukrainian soldiers had been wounded. Military officials of the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) in the Bosnian capital said the incident involved an armoured personnel carrier (APC) in the no man's land between Croat-held Stup and Serb-held Ilidza. Tanjug News Agency quoted Serb sources as saying three Ukrainians had been wounded. It said Serb forces had evacuated two of them but the third was still trapped in the APC, which was under fire from Muslim positions.

Protests surround Columbus anniversary

MIAMI (R) — In fourteen hundred and ninety-two, Columbus sailed the ocean blue. In Nineteen hundred and ninety-two, few really seem to care. Instead of lavish international celebrations Monday on the 500th anniversary of the "discovery" of the Americas, the world is debating whether the Italian navigator was a hero or an exploiter, a brilliant explorer or a clerk who could not tell the difference between the Caribbean and Calcutta. Throughout the Caribbean, the Americas and Europe, the anniversary of Columbus' voyage is being marked on Oct. 12 with parades, protests, plays — and indifference. U.S. advertisers have complained that few companies are interested in using the anniversary to help sell products because of the controversy surrounding the event. A latter-day Christopher Columbus will amuse sun worshippers on a Caribbean beach in the Bahamas, where the explorer likely first left footprints in the Americas exactly 500 years ago.

Pope arrives in Caribbean

SANTO DOMINGO, Dominican Republic (R) — A healthy-looking Pope John II arrived in the Dominican Republic to begin his first trip since major surgery to remove a large intestinal tumour three months ago. "You have seen for yourselves. You have heard for yourselves. It is your job to judge," the 72-year-old Pontiff joked with reporters who asked him how he felt aboard the plane taking him to the Caribbean nation. Arriving on the plane where Christopher Columbus set up his administrative base in the new world 500 years ago, the Pope also acknowledged that the church had made some mistakes as it converted indigenous people to Christianity.

Radio contact with pioneer lost

SAN FRANCISCO (R) — Scientists have lost radio contact with the pioneer spacecraft as it passed through the upper atmosphere of Venus, spelling the end of a successful 14-year mission to find out more about the planet, a spokesman for the U.S. space agency said. Pioneer's main explorers ran out of fuel earlier this month, dooming it to burn up when it entered the atmosphere of Venus, 128 million miles from Earth. The space agency said the spacecraft's radio signal failed Thursday when it reached an orbital low point about 80 miles above Venus. Although the craft was damaged, it was not expected to burn up entirely until about Oct. 20. But scientists would not know for sure when the craft burned up as they now had no way of tracking pioneer.

Bomb explodes at Thai ministry

BANGKOK (AP) — A bomb exploded in front of the Ministry of Interior compound, wounding a policeman and an official of the ministry, police said. Earlier a radio station reported that three persons had been wounded in the explosion. Police said the bomb exploded near a police guard booth, slightly wounding the policeman on duty and a female official of the ministry who was making a telephone call from a nearby public phone booth. No arrests were made and police said they suspected that the bombing incident stemmed from revenge sought by relatives of a thief who was shot dead by the wounded policeman several months ago.

Collor's wife accused of embezzlement

RIO DE JANEIRO (R) — The wife of now-powerless Brazilian President Fernando Collor DeMello has been accused of embezzling money from a charity organisation the once headed, a police spokesman said Friday. Spokesman Jairo Kullman in the northeastern city of Maceio said Rosane Collor was accused of embezzlement and conspiracy in a police investigation of charges that she diverted funds from the Brazilian Assistance League, which aid needy families. The report, which falls short of an indictment but means police investigators believe there are grounds to prosecute, alleges that the money was diverted to pay the first lady's personal expenses, police said. The report could form the basis of an indictment against the first lady if a federal judge decides to pursue the charges. Her husband, President Fernando Collor, was accused of profiting from a money-for-favours racket and was suspended from office last week.

French observers criticise Angola vote

PARIS (AP) — Four French observers at the Angolan elections said they witnessed irregularities during the voting, including intimidation and cases of non-respect for a secret ballot.

The observers said observers and the international press should be called in to help verify the final results.

They said it was "regrettable" that observers had no access to the collection process, locally or nationally, during last week's election.

"Given recent events, this is unfortunate, of a nature to compromise the democratic process," a statement by the observers said.

The observers are Didier Bariani, a former minister and mayor of one of Paris' 20 districts; Jacques Gasseau, former French ambassador to Luanda; Claude Gosselin, deputy mayor of Paris; and Yves Verwaerde, a European parliamentary deputy.

The four were among 800 international observers who monitored the election. The final result, being contested by candidate Jonas Savimbi, the former rebel leader.

Mr. Savimbi was trailing President Jose Eduardo Dos Santos. Mr. Savimbi and his aides have accused the government of rigging the election, raising fears of a new outbreak in a 16-year civil war that was halted by peace accords last year. At least 350,000 people died in the 1975-91 war.

Bush steps up attack on Clinton before debate

WASHINGTON (R) — President George Bush has tried to set the stage for Sunday's debate between the three U.S. presidential candidates by stepping up his attack on Bill Clinton's anti-war activities.

"I'm standing with American principles and it is wrong to demonstrate against your country when your country's at war," Mr. Bush said in a speech to the Fraternal Order of Police in Cincinnati, Ohio Friday.

The Republican president was referring to Mr. Clinton's involvement in anti-Vietnam War protests while a student at Oxford University 23 years ago. Bush said he would not back away from his new line of attack even though Democrats have likened his broadsides to the notorious cold war Communist-baiting of the late Senator Joseph McCarthy.

Mr. Clinton, who spent Friday in Kansas City preparing for the first debate, said Mr. Bush was simply pursuing a strategy "cooked up" by the far-right, and the Democratic nominee's aides said their polls show Mr. Bush's strategy is backfiring.

Independent Ross Perot continued to keep a low profile with no public appearances ahead of Sunday's face-off.

Mr. Bush, who is trailing badly in the polls, has been trying to make Mr. Clinton's character an

issue in the campaign hoping that voters will decide on Nov. 3 they trust the Republican incumbent more than the Democratic challenger or independent candidate Ross Perot.

"I don't pretend I'm the world's greatest debater," Mr. Bush said during a campaign rally in Columbus, Ohio. "And you may not always agree. But you know where I stand."

He accused Mr. Clinton of "waffling" on the issues.

"He's the reason we're having three debates," Mr. Bush charged. "One is for Governor Clinton to state his position and the other two are for him to change his mind."

Republican strategists said Mr. Bush's latest round of harsh attacks on Mr. Clinton was aimed at slicing into the Arkansas governor's double-digit lead in opinion polls.

But Clinton spokeswoman Dee Dee Myers claimed Mr. Bush's attacks were not having that effect.

"Nothing we've seen shows it's doing anything but continuing to erode (Bush's) support. This is not helping him," she told reporters.

Public opinion polls show Mr. Clinton, who has made the sluggish economy the central issue in his campaign, with a comfortable lead over Mr. Bush.

The latest daily Cable News

Network-USA Today-Gallup poll released Friday gave Mr. Clinton a 15-point lead, with 49 per cent of the vote to 34 per cent for Mr. Bush and 10 per cent for independent Ross Perot.

With the first of three presidential debates scheduled for Sunday in St. Louis, both Mr. Bush and Mr. Clinton, as well as Texas billionaire Perot, were preparing for the clash.

Arkansas governor Clinton withdrew to a hotel "training camp" in Kansas City, to get away from the press of state business in Little Rock. He plans to stay there before leaving for St. Louis late Saturday.

Mr. Bush stayed at the White House Friday morning with no public appointments before taking a short campaign trip to the midwestern state of Ohio. Mr. Bush plans to hold mock debates with aides at the White House Saturday, an aide said.

President Bush is locked in a tight race with Mr. Clinton in Texas, a state that is critical to the president's chances for reelection next month, the New York Times reported Friday.

The latest New York Times/CBS News poll showed Mr. Bush with a narrow 41 per cent to 37 per cent lead over Mr. Clinton in Texas. The margin of error in the poll was three percentage points. The newspaper said Mr. Perot,

who re-entered the race as an independent last week, had modest 11 per cent support in Texas, his home state.

While Mr. Bush's standing is more comfortable in Texas than in nationwide polls, his adopted home state is a virtual must for the Republicans if they hope to garner the 270 electoral votes needed to win the national election on Nov. 3.

The newspaper said it was a grim omen that 26 days before the election Mr. Bush had yet to lock up Texas, with 32 electoral votes.

The newspaper also noted that Mr. Clinton retained a strong lead in California, which provides one-fifth of the electoral votes needed to win, and was ahead in many other sun belt and midwestern states that have been republican strongholds in recent presidential elections.

The latest poll showed the economy, which was hurting Mr. Bush nationwide, was also bailing him in Texas, the newspaper said.

Seventy-five per cent of Texas voters said the economy was "bad" or "very bad" and only 23 per cent approved of the president's handling of the economy.

Nationwide, the president is trailing his Democratic challenger by anywhere from eight to 17 percentage points in the polls.

COLUMN

Australians are losing battle to save whales

SYDNEY (R) — Australian wildlife rescuers were losing the fight to save a group of pilot whales stranded on the northwest coast of the southern island state of Tasmania. Wildlife officer Hans Wapstra said 59 whales had died since the group of 76 beached themselves Friday in shallow water on a stretch of coastline at Macquarie Heads, 200 kilometres northwest of the state capital Hobart. Rescuers were still trying to herd the surviving whales back into the icy seas. "With whale rescues there is always some risk that some will come back," Mr. Wapstra said reporters. "They are more or less at the mercy of the waves and would not know where to go. Also they may have been stressed." Mr. Wapstra said sand banks and channels parallel to the beach confused the mammals' sonar system and wildlife officers would keep a watch on the beach for any returning whales.

Madonna denies French taxman is after her

PARIS (R) — A record company for American rock star Madonna, in Paris to promote her new album Erotica, denied a press report that she was wanted by French authorities for unpaid taxes. The French daily Liberation said Madonna, who is staying in a 45,000 franc (\$9,000) a night suite at the Ritz Hotel, faced a tax bill for 10,472,630 francs (\$2.1 million). "The rumours which say Louise Magdalena Ciccone (Madonna) owes money to the French state are completely unfounded," said Sire Records, the company representing her in France. "Neither she nor her advisers have received any summons of that kind." Liberation said the tax bill arose from two concerts in France in 1987 for which Madonna had failed to declare earnings. The sum had been compounded by interest and penalties. Earlier this week, French customs in Le Havre impounded 25,000 copies of the French edition of Madonna's new book Sex, in which she poses naked in erotic pictures. The Interior Ministry has asked a commission to judge whether people under 18 should be allowed to buy the book.

Environmentalists dig up wrong garden

BRUSSELS (R) — Angry environmentalists carved up the front garden of a house owned by EC Environment Commissioner Karel Van Miert last week, but got the timing wrong — he had moved out. The group protesting against EC funding for a tunnel through the Pyrenees were told after plunging holes across the garden that the house had been left to Mr. Van Miert's estranged wife some time ago, an EC official said.

EC to pay farmers to give apples to the needy

BRUSSELS (R) — The European Commission said it would pay farmers to give surplus apples to children, the sick and the needy rather than let them rot. "Currently, large quantities of apples have been withdrawn from the market," the commission said, adding that it would pay apple growers' transport costs if they gave them to schools, hospitals, charities or prisons.